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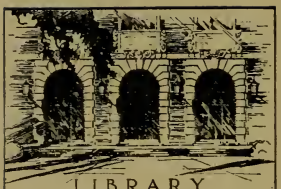
THE

VILLAGE

OF

MARIENDORPT.

VOL. I.



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THE

VILLAGE

OF

MARIENDORPT.

A TALE.

BY

Miss ANNA MARIA PORTER,

AUTHOR OF THE FAST OF ST. MAGDALEN, KNIGHT OF ST. JOHN, &c. &c. &c.

My son! My son!
Do I behold thy face? Oh, foid thine arms
Around me, clasp me to thy bosom, lean
Thy cheek 'gainst my fond cheek, and shade my breast
With the thick ringlets of thy clustering hair!
* * * * *
What shall I say to thee, — how tell thee all?

POTTER'S *Euripides.*

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

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1821.

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TO THE

PRINCIPAL INHABITANTS

OF

LONG-DITTON AND THAMES-DITTON.

To whom can I inscribe the following pages more properly, or with livelier sentiments of grateful regard, than to those valued and kind neighbours, collectively, whose sympathy soothed the first period of that tedious illness during which my family were unavoidably absent, and whose personal attentions so often supplied the place of those affectionate attendants? — Accept then, my dear friends and neighbours, this public tribute of gratitude and esteem! And be assured, that since the altered health in which you take so

amiable an interest, forces me to seek change of situation, I shall carry with me the cherished remembrance of a neighbourhood, where the habits of elegant society, and the graces of education, are added to the more attaching qualities of kindness and goodness.

To you, especially, dear, distant friend, whose enchantments of countenance, mind, and heart, formed the sunshine of my sick-room for so many weeks, and who renounced the gayest scenes to become my nurse — To you, I can only offer the expression of this earnest wish: may perfect happiness, with the fortunate man whose title you now bear, be the delightful recompense of all your virtues! —

Long-Ditton,
December, 1820.

Before the Reader pays me the compliment of reading the following Tale, I must beg him to give a moment's attention to my account of the circumstances under which it has been written.

"The Village of Mariendorpt" was begun in the autumn of 1819; pursued during the short suspensions of a year's serious illness; and concluded now under the immediate pressure of the same depressing malady. It would never have been finished, I believe, had not the desire of stimulating my mental powers to some salutary occupation, induced me to send nearly half the MS. to the press, early in the spring of the present year: the remainder, completed under the influence of bodily suffering and consequent

languor of spirit, will, I fear, require all the indulgence of my friends and the public at large ; I must, therefore, hope, that when the whole is judged, " mercy will temper justice."

Long Ditton,
December, 1820.

THE VILLAGE OF MARIENDORPT.

CHAPTER I.

That disastrous war between the Catholic and Protestant powers, which at the beginning of the seventeenth century, nearly desolated Germany, had already lasted one-and-twenty years, when the autumn of 1640 was rendered memorable to Julian Roselheim, a Bavarian general, by his prince's grant of two lordships in that part of his dominions (the Palatinate) which the injustice of the Emperor and the misfortunes of the Palsgrave

annexed to Bavaria. Sprung from the youngest branch of a once noble but decayed family, Roselheim was born subject to the Palsgrave: but when that credulous Prince, having accepted the crown of Bohemia, and undertaken the defence of the Protestant cause, was put under the Ban of the empire, and deprived of his hereditary states, together with his new kingdom, Roselheim, as a professor of the Catholic faith, believed it his duty to swear fealty to him upon whom those states were bestowed. He therefore made his first campaign, under the banners of Bavaria.

In this campaign it was his good fortune to have frequent opportunities of displaying his intrepidity and military genius; so that he speedily attracted the attention of those two renowned generals, Walstein and Tilly, and their frequent commendations procured him the favour of his illustrious master.

Since then, he had adhered to the joint

interests of the Elector and the Emperor, with peculiar steadiness; and amidst all the vicissitudes of a war long continued and obstinately maintained, preserved the reputation of a dauntless soldier, an able commander, and a shrewd politician.

Though a veteran soldier, Roselheim was even now in the meridian of life; and at a very early age having united the graces of a fine figure to those of a martial air and frank manner, so charming in the eyes of women, had made the unsought conquest of a lady whose rank and power were irresistible to a man ambitious of distinctions. This lady, the daughter of a reigning duke, and at twenty the widow of a Margrave's heir, proved her right to that freedom of choice, which at the same age she certainly would not have enjoyed in her father's palace, and gave her hand to the comparatively humble Roselheim.

From this brilliant marriage our brave

adventurer's highest prosperity may be dated: his rise, after that, was rapid: and, if his private happiness had borne full proportion to his outward honours, Roselheim would have been the most enviable of human beings: but there were circumstances to be related hereafter, which infused much bitter into his cup, and amongst those was the mortification of his fair partner being childless. At length even that disquiet ceased; and either in pity or in wrath, after an union of nine years, Heaven granted them a son.

Indebted to Roselheim for many secret as well as public services, the Elector signified his intention of standing sponsor for the boy, in person, and of investing the father, on the same day, with the lordships already mentioned. A former grant of this munificent patron's, in the north of Bavaria, was the place appointed for these august ceremonies; and to this spot the principal friends and rela-

tions of the two houses of Sax-L——g and of Roselheim were invited.

Hither kindred and friends, some with pleased and others with galled feelings, flocked from camp and court to grace the proud occasion. Those who esteemed the favourite, or hoped to profit by his elevation, saw in these new distinctions, only additional proofs of their Prince's discerning affection: but the judicious silenced their surprize at such lavish bounty, and the envious their repinings, by reflecting that it was policy in Maximilian (whose views upon the crown of the Romans were already apparent,) thus to attach the husband of a high-spirited woman, whose influence over her own powerful family was known to be omnipotent.

The day appointed for this festival, proved one of the finest of a fine October. The thick beech woods that spread below Roselheim's embattled mansion, and were broken into glades in his park, were

richly coloured by the season. It seemed as though the very trees had assumed more gorgeous mantles to give the scene greater pomp.

The clear stream of the Regen, now lost, and now glancing again, was seen darting through those umbrageous woods like a bright arrow: beyond lay the vale of the river, with its enamelled pastures and lowing herds; and farther still, arose the mountains of Bohemia and Silesia, crowding into giant heaps on the distant horizon.

The banners of Roselheim streamed gaily from all the pinnacles of the edifice, surmounted by those of the prince he served.

In the extensive park which connected the garden of the castle with the meadows, tables were spread, and huge animals roasting whole, to regale the inhabitants of the adjacent hamlets. In the courts and outer halls thronged the tenantry and armed vassals of Roselheim,

waiting impatiently for the arrival of the Elector. A courier had already notified the approach of the illustrious guest, and given warning to the chapel bells to begin their joyous peal: repeated discharges of ordnance were announcing this to the vulgar crowd below, as General Roselheim stood on the rampart reading a private billet from his Prince. This billet informed him, that in consequence of an unexpected movement of the enemy on the other side of the Danube, he must prepare to check it at the critical moment, and for that purpose must be content to quit his house and company that very night.

Roselheim had just time to give some hasty orders upon the subject, to his confidential aid-de-camp, when the rolling of carriages, the trampling of horses, the flourish of trumpets, and the clamourous shouts of men, ascending from below, called him to other duties. He looked from the height on which he was stand-

ing, and saw, amidst the flashing sabres of a splendid body-guard, and the tossed-up hats of boors, the gilded coach of the Elector, coming along the left bank of the river.

The coach and its clattering train of dragoons and courtiers, soon wheeled in at the great gate, to which Roselheim had by this time transferred himself. The young child and its mother, covered with the finest laces and the whitest satins, awaited the august sponsor in a splendid hall, of which the noblest ornaments were the colours won by its lord, from France and Sweden.

After the customary compliments and congratulations, all the company adjourned to the chapel, where the unconscious heir of so many honours was held at the baptismal font by the first prince in the empire, receiving there the joint names of Maximilian Julian. The investiture of Roselheim followed this ceremony. From that hour the new lord

of Rhinegravestein and Wisbaden took the title of the former lordship.

At the clamorous entreaties of the vassals, the splendid party, on returning from the chapel, went out upon a steep terrace, where the infant heir was shown to the crowd in the tilt-court below. The grave Elector, either courting popularity, or seized with a sudden fit of gallantry towards its handsome mother, took the child from her arms, and stooping rather awkwardly over the low balustrade, let his precious burthen drop.

There, perhaps, would have terminated a father's hopes, but for a youth in the habit of a collegiate, who was entering the court by a door in the terrace wall, and who caught the infant as it fell. A more acute expression of anguish than was due to the accident thus softened, convulsed Rhinegravestein's fine features, and fixed him for an instant motionless: the next moment he was among the terrified people below.

The Countess shrieked, and all the ladies echoed her shriek; the Elector stumbled up by the aid of half a score of courtiers; and no one knew what had befallen the little Julian, till they saw him by their side, crying lustily in his father's arms.

Who had saved the child, and how he was miraculously on the terrace again, every body asked, and nobody waited to hear. The sobbing innocent was frightened, but not hurt; and kisses, hushings, and caressing epithets presently overpowered, if they could not silence, his subsiding cries.

Her alarm dissipated by a careful examination of all his limbs, the Countess was courtier enough, as she transferred him to his nurse, to answer the Elector's apologies by a brilliant compliment: but her husband's feelings were evidently not so easily smoothed; for he was become exceedingly pale; and obtaining per-

mission to retire for a few moments, quitted the company.

His absence was of short duration: he returned cheerful and well again.

After this, every thing without the mansion was festivity, every thing within it magnificence. While the ignoble crowd were regaled in the park and outer halls, the noble guests within, sat down to a banquet glittering with covers of gold, vases of crystal, and sparkling wines. The meal was prolonged till evening; so that the sun had long set, ere the company removed into the dancing-room. The fair hand of the Countess was of course claimed by the Elector, who acquitted himself perhaps not so well in this duty, as he had done in the more serious ones preceding it. But, however that might be, the Lord of Rhinegravestein eyed him with complacency. Though once a looker-on might have detected a glance from his eye to that of his lady's, conveying a sportive comparison between

his own magnificently-perfect figure and the shapeless one of their Prince.

At that moment, when pride and vanity were alike delighting themselves, the Count's eye fell on some object passing a distant door-way at the termination of the saloon. His colour changed directly. For a few moments he followed that object with his looks, or at least with his thoughts; then suddenly rallying, withdrew his eyes, and turned away to claim a partner for the dance.

The object which had disturbed a second time, this minion of fortune in his trance of felicity, was a dejected youth of sixteen, who with a slow pace and nearly-closed eyelids, through which tears were struggling, took his solitary way into the garden of the castle.

Its pastures and terraces hung on the steepest side of the hill, and being eastward, did not overlook that part of the domain where the peasantry were still feasting; but the sounds of their obstre-

perous mirth and clamorous games, broke frequently on the deep stiliness which had invited his steps; and he turned from them with a sigh.

Every now and then he paused, as if to catch the sprightly strains of the violins in the ball-room; and then, as though such gay music vexed his melancholy, he renewed his walk. At length, he stopped, and raising his interesting face, looked up at the lofty battlements where the additional banners of Rhinegravestein and Wisbaden now waved in the splendid moonlight.

"Of what metal *is* this heart?" he asked, in a sorrowful tone, pressing it tightly as he spoke. "Is it pride? is it shame? is it envy, that convulses me thus?" And again he took several steps under the high trees. "No; not envy," he resumed, in a more cheerful tone; "God is my witness, that when I first kissed my little brother, at the very moment his mother told me to consider him

as my future lord, I felt as much love for him, as pity for myself; and when I saved him from death perhaps, O what joy it was! But it *is* hard to see all these honours, to hear all these rejoicings for the birth of a child born to the same father, and to know that I am nothing! Well; my father has destined me properly: better to be forgotten in a cloister than slighted in the world. Yet there is a stirring spirit here, which tells me I could win honours for myself. But what would that signify, since I have no mother to joy in my actions? And if she were alive, no mother that I dare challenge the world's respect for."

Another deep sigh would have followed this apostrophe, had not Rupert stifled it. Pursuing his aimless walk, he proceeded down the sloping path, towards the river. As he went along, he held close communion with himself upon his past and present fate: it is true, he had something to lament, but more for which

to be grateful. He was illegitimate, and his mother had been a heretic; and he was destined to a monastic life. But then, how few illegitimate sons were ever granted so many benefits? Instead of leaving him in want and obscurity, the Count of Rhinegravestein had placed him, from his childhood, under the care of the monks of St. Benedict, in their celebrated college in Saltzbourg; he had liberally supplied him with every thing necessary to perfect his education there, and had often gone thither himself to see his son, and bestow upon him endearing testimonies of his affection. Even the Countess, though she might be permitted to look with distaste and scorn upon the offspring of unlawful attachment, had expressly invited him to witness the festivities on her infant's christening; and had promised (perhaps somewhat too proudly), that if Rupert became a zealous member of the priesthood, there was no dignity of their church to which he might

not aspire hereafter through her powerful interest.

While Rupert recapitulated these things, he bitterly reproached himself with ingratitude and discontent; and taking his heart more closely to task, asked himself these questions. Was it the rich inheritance of his father's war-won lordships that he coveted? Was it the sounding titles annexed to them? Was it the world's bustle and pleasures that he languished for? Or what was it that made him shrink from the sacred profession allotted him? What made him sad when he saw so many others happy? What brought the tears into his eyes when he first saw the little Julian on the lap of his mother?

Rupert was too young and inexperienced to render justice to his own heart: otherwise he might have answered, that it was for true honour, not clamorous vanities he panted; for the birth-right of an unsullied name, the

blessing of virtuous parents, and the freedom of well-principled inclinations. But gentle and affectionate by nature, of a temper inclined to see every human creature in the kindest light, and to find reasons for being contented, if not happy, he felt it easier to exaggerate the merits of his father, than to render himself justice; therefore resolving to shake off the melancholy he blushed at, although the severity of his college laws did not permit him to join the gay party in the dancing room, he thought the sight of the merry peasantry would do it; and he quickened his steps towards the park.

He soon reached the low shore of the Regen, where it washed the foot of the gardens, and was crossed by a romantic little bridge, overgrown with ivy. The wind moaning through its single arch, the moon beams playing on the waters, their low rippling amongst the reeds, and now and then a sudden blast sweeping over the deep woods beyond, seemed to

soothe the disturbed feelings of Rupert. He stopped, and leaning over the parapet, for a while watched the sparkling current below.

The soft influence of the moon-light gradually tranquillized him: and as his unusual mood of sadness passed away, the image of his little brother arose upon his heart in all the charms of innocence and beauty. He seemed again to feel the smooth touch of that lily skin, and to meet the smiling eyes and outstretched hands of the pretty babe.

The little Julian had indeed made a sort of spring in its nurse's arms when it first saw Rupert; and at the moment, Rupert had felt as if that action were an acknowledgment of their near relationship.

Recalling this moment now, he became more than ever shocked at his envious repinings, as he persisted in calling them; and hastening to drive away every painful thought, resolving for the future to

make his happiness in deserving and cultivating that brother's love, he crossed the bridge, and entered upon the park.

Youth is the season of a thousand fond yet sacred fancies. That young heart which has not again and again woven for itself a romance of noble actions and tender sacrifices; which has not imagined scenes wherein it was to win the hard-contested prize of self-conquest; scenes in which it was to derive its greatest joy from the services it rendered, or the advantages it relinquished to others; that heart may reach to vulgar goodness, but will never attain to greatness.

Rupert's was at this moment full of such day-dreams. His rapid fancy suddenly brought him to the age of grave counsel, and vested him almost with paternal influence over his youthful brother: he imagined the all-indulged Julian returning his fraternal affection with generous warmth, bringing his errors and his repentance to the bosom

of a brother, at once his confessor and friend, and becoming through his pious admonitions, a blessing to society at large.

Thus indulging in fancy, in the luxury of a great soul, the diffusion of improvement and happiness, Rupert advanced to that open part of the park where the peasants were yet revelling.

In all the temporary erections for their accommodation, he saw them either feasting, or dancing, or playing at games of chance. Some had fallen asleep after drinking too largely to the healths of the new Count and his heir. Others sat smoking at the entrance of the booths, and a few were exercising themselves with games of skill and strength in the open air.

The merriment of these poor villagers seemed to say that they were happy, and Rupert found a benevolent pleasure in going amongst them, enquiring the nature of some of their uncouth sports,

and helping the old people to their crutch or their pipe. He smiled on many of their strange diversions; and was actually laughing at the grotesque mimickry of a puppet by the rustic wit of the crowd, when he felt his arm strongly grasped by some one behind, and heard these words whispered deliberately and sternly: "Young man! do you ever remember that you have a mother?"

"Have!" repeated Rupert, turning round with astonishment.

The person who had spoken, was a young woman, not distinguishable in her attire from the other peasants, but as remarkable for her countenance as for her stature and bold proportions. Her look was somewhat severe, though energetic almost to nobleness; and her otherwise dark forehead, whitened by the reflection of the moon, displayed beauty, as well as strong character. The eyes, both of the speaker and the person spoken to,

remained for an instant, fixed upon each other. The woman was the first to withdraw hers; and then she said, in a yet lower and more earnest voice, "As you expect God's blessing, show me where I may talk further to you of this injured lady."

This epithet, "injured," and the tone in which it was pronounced, acted like electricity upon the heart of a son. With a confused consciousness that their discourse must be secret, he whispered her to follow him into the woods, immediately taking the way thither himself.

With the sensatiou of one walking in a dream, he waited for his singular acquaintance under the deep shade of the first forest trees. Her quick step was soon heard. When she came in sight, she pointed for him to lead on still farther. Rupert obeyed.

With a heart now beating to absolute

pain, and feet stumbling from haste, he conducted her into one of those vacant log-houses which were scattered through the woods, for the purpose of storing up winter fuel; and there he listened to a tale, or rather to the relation of a few facts, corroborated by testimonials he could not doubt, which harrowed up his soul. Amazement, pity, indignation, and grief, ruled his heart by turns. He learnt enough to change gratitude into resentment; shame into exultation; and becoming master of a secret hitherto meanly dissimulated, ceased to see any dearer object in life than a sad and far-distant mother, to whose consolation he vowed to dedicate that life with all its hopes.

Thus feeling, Rupert, whom the powerful and varied emotions of an hour had made ten years older, left the wood-house with the stranger; and giving a long, long gaze to the bannered towers of

Rhinegravestein as they rose proudly above the woods, turned with a brimming eye, yet smiling lip, to commence his independent pursuit of fame, fortune, and happiness.

CHAP. II.

The same October moon which had brightened the romantic windings of the bowery Regen during this memorable meeting, was shining at that very time upon a broad, strait canal in the province of Utrecht in Holland; disclosing a far different scene, to far different personages.

This scene consisted of a neat village, or rather single street of white houses, absolutely glittering with cleanliness. Between flowed the canal, beautified above and below the village by ranks of stately limes. Through the openings of these trees, smaller canals and mere watercourses were seen gleaming; marking the divisions of separate properties.

Beyond, extended a level country, occasionally diversified by a lone farm-house or a village spire; and rendered remarkable by innumerable wind-mills, which, ranging all along the higher ground of the horizon, stood there like the spectres of a giant host. A trechtschuyht on the canal, with its round hull and tawny sail, caught the moonlight on the gilded ball of its mast; while its long train of towing horses paced slowly under the trees on one bank, and the congregation of the village church returned as slowly from evening prayers, under those of the opposite shore.

The minister of this little church followed his flock at a short distance, his young daughter hanging on his arm, and two decent women servants walking closely behind.

The minister was a man of a benign, though somewhat melancholy aspect, as if his own sorrows had increased the wish to dissipate those of others: even now, while pursuing his pulpit theme, he discoursed

with his servants and his daughter upon the trials of this life, stiling them "but the afflictions of a moment," the air blowing freshly from the water, and lifting his thick white locks, showed his eyes suffused with tears: a smile, however, was on his lips; and whenever he resumed his instructive topic, he was careful to address himself oftener to his humble companions than to his attentive child.

Such of his parishioners as preceded him, lingered at their separate doors to drop their curtsey, or lift their hat, as he passed. The venerable man requited them with a bow and a blessing.

"Ours is certainly the prettiest house in the village," said his young daughter, as they drew near their own dwelling, "and I love it so much!"

"'Tis that which makes it the prettiest in thine eyes, and in mine also, my child," replied her father, indulgently: "but at the time I chose it, Meeta, I in-

tended to take the very humblest. When the sheep are cruelly driven from their fold, the shepherd should not be thinking of a pleasant shelter for himself. But ten years, and thy pretty fancies, and the neatness of these good girls, (kindly turning to a spinster of forty and a damsel of thirty,) have made our home noticeable." And as he spoke, he bent his head under the pointed arch of two yew trees, which guarded the entrance.

Perhaps no eye, but one accustomed to Dutch landscapes, would have found any thing to admire in the good Muhldenau's dwelling. However, what it wanted in picturesqueness, it made up in the moral beauty of order: and to a lover of order, there was much to admire in a spotless white parsonage, with doors and window-frames of as bright a green as the glossy hollies before them; a pretty flower garden without a weed; gravel walks as smooth as crystal; and a plentiful orchard ruddy with apples. The house

itself was not placed directly upon the canal, like the others in the village, but retired far enough back to afford space for the flower garden. A long lattice-work arbour covered with vines, after a fashion common in Holland, formed the principal walk through this garden to a square covered balcony, or rather summer-house, (if a single room may be so called,) which projected from the bank of the canal, close to the water, and made a pleasant place to take tea in of summer evenings.

Formal and neat as every thing was, within and about the good minister's dwelling, it had an air of cheerfulness and home. It looked as if the family it contained, were happy and well regulated; and gave that impression of comfort to a beholder, without which, the finest residence is insipid.

The parlour, into which Muhldenau and his daughter entered, was equal in glossy freshness to the outside of the

house ; but its chairs and tables were evidently not under such rigid laws of discipline as the box-trees and yew-hedges of the gardener. Every article of furniture, nay, even the wainscoted walls, and oak floor itself, might have served for looking-glasses. A stove in the middle of the room was gaily burnished with china tiles ; and the single bay-window, which nearly filled the end of the apartment fronting the garden, was hung with a chintz curtain, that seemed fresh from the loom.

The only ornaments on the walls, were well-stored book-cases, carefully provided with glass doors ; a tall, solemn-looking clock, cased from head to foot in carved ebony, and surmounted by a bronze figure of Time, grim enough for Death himself; and a single picture, painted by the great master of that day, representing a fair young man, in royal robes, holding a scroll in his hand, lettered, " the Confession of Augsbourg."

Casting a glance on this portrait, the respectable Muhldenau seated himself, and giving his hat to his daughter to hang up on one of the mahogany pegs ranged along the door, (the gown was always retained at that period,) leaned back in his high oak chair, as if lost in sudden thought.

The elder of the women servants now entered with her master's posset; and as she stood irresolute where to place it, she cast a furtive glance round the altered apartment. Roused by her attitude, the good minister smiled. "Poor Jemima!" he cried, "thou art in grievous tribulation for thy orderly room. My lawless chair revolted from the wall, and yon table, which Meeta has left standing at right angles, shocks all thy notions of symmetry. But suppose we wink at their rebellion to-night! so near the window, the moon will light us at our supper, and save thy bright candlesticks another rubbing."

The demure Jemima only curtsied

gravely, and placing the little supper tray where he directed, (while adroitly twitching the table into a straight line), she quitted the parlour.

The young Meeta now busied herself in cutting the toast into her father's posset, and arranging the curtain to give him more light.

While engaged in these affectionate offices, her slender shape flexile and graceful as the willow, her youthful face coloured like the brilliant flowers of the balsam, her hair brighter than the sunny side of clustered nuts, formed a picturesque contrast with the mild, dignified, and sorrow-touched aspect of her father, who sat leaning back, somewhat exhausted from the evening service, receiving the full rays of the moon upon his silver hair and dark cassock. His eyes were fixed upon his daughter.

"Bless thee, my Meeta!" he said, "I pray God this day may never return with-

out finding thee happier and better than when it left thee before."

Meeta bent one knee while he was speaking, and kissed the hand that had been laid in more solemn benediction on her head at the beginning of the day. Her father then raised her to his heart. "You have not forgot your promise, I hope, dear father," she said, in the sweet accent of caressing youth, "there is a whole hour till bed-time. You remember that you promised to tell me Madame's history, on my fourteenth birth-day."

"I do remember it, my Meeta! and it is that which makes me somewhat sad and serious now: for 'tis a melancholy story thou hast to hear. But I hold it good to exercise the young heart in virtuous sympathies; and there is instruction to be gained from every event of life, whether suffered or related. This day too, my child — this day" — he added, after a long pause, letting his eyes

rest upon her with something far beyond tenderness in their expression — "This day, on which thou wast born, is the anniversary of Madame's greatest calamity; and of my father's death. This day twenty years, that true Christian perished on a scaffold at the age of seventy-five, a martyr for his religion, and his Prince. Oh woeful times! neither his white hairs, nor his many virtues, could touch the hard hearts of his butchers. Jesus pardon them!"

At this address, the carnation face of Meeta became colourless; she gazed with awe and horror upon her father's agitated countenance, till at length he bade her draw a seat near his, and compose herself to listen.

Meeta obeyed: placing herself on a low stool at his feet, she rested her clasped hands upon his knee, and sat looking up at him, in fixed attention.

"It is Madame's history that I have to tell thee, my child," he resumed,

" and what thou dost not already know of thy father's, will mix with it. She was a Bohemian heiress, of the best blood in that country. Her mother died in giving her birth; and her father, after having been mainly instrumental in procuring the important privileges obtained for the Protestants, from the Emperor Rodolph, died in the flower of his age; leaving her a fine income and a noble residence, among the Sudet mountains.

" Henrietta Stolzenberg was barely sixteen, when she was thus left an orphan: but Heaven had endowed her with a mind as strong as her heart was tender; and unlike other Bohemian heiresses, who carried their revenues into Austria, and spent them among the dissipations of Vienna, she remained upon her estate, cultivating rational pursuits, and practising the Christian charities, alike to Catholic and Protestant. Our dear friend was a sincere, unostentatious professor of the latter religion; and though I did

not know her till after this period, the reputation of her active goodness, so peculiarly admirable, in a very young and lovely woman, reached me at Prague.

"In the year 1619, (her age you will bear in mind, numbered with the year, that is, she was born the last day of the 16th century,) the Protestant subjects of Austria, those in Bohemia especially, first oppressed, and then openly persecuted; defrauded of all the rights solemnly secured to them by the Emperor Rodolph; threw off their allegiance to his faithless successor, and offered the fatal gift of their crown to my unfortunate master. Frederick V., then Elector Palatine, or as he was more commonly stiled, Palsgrave, was Prince of the finest part of Germany; he had lately married the only daughter of James King of England; was young, beloved, amiable; of immaculate honour, and impregnable integrity; and being already at the head of the Protestant league,

believed it his duty to accept the right of succouring the distressed Bohemians.

" Having accepted their throne, he was crowned with his magnanimous Queen, in the city of Prague, during the winter of the year I speak of.

" But Bohemia formed too large a part of the Emperor's hereditary dominions to be easily relinquished ; and assisted by the troops and gold of Bavaria, he succeeded in driving his rival (who had been deceived and deserted by the ally on whom he principally relied) out of Prague, in the course of one campaign. Bavaria was afterwards rewarded for his services on this occasion, by the annexation of the two Palatinates to his ample territory.

" The war had been obstinately maintained on both sides: the opposition of the Protestants unwearied, the revenge of the Catholics merciless : the scaffolds of Bohemia were soon as red with the blood of her patriots and martyrs, as her

fields had been with that of her warriors. My honoured father, though a foreigner, was amongst these human sacrifices.

" He had accompanied the Palsgrave in his quality of state counsellor, and falling into the hands of the enemy, was their first victim.

" He had indeed the dismal distinction of precedency over that memorable Bohemian, who claiming the right of age, put a younger man aside, when the latter would have yielded the venerable patriot a few more instants of life by pressing first to the block himself.

" I was, alas, far distant at the time. My situation in the court of Frederick was that of chaplain and governor to Prince Henry; and when the war began to assume an alarming aspect, his anxious parents sent me to conduct my precious charge into Holland.

" Directly after my departure, my father was surprised in a frontier town, whither he had gone on state business,

tried, condemned, and executed, in the course of a single day — executed, not as a traitor, for he was born subject to the Palsgrave, but for refusing to subscribe to the articles of the Church of Rome.

"The aweful battle of Prague followed this atrocity: its consequences you know; the utter destruction of my poor master's fortunes, the loss of his kingdom, and his electorate. He was driven, with his Queen and helpless babes, to ask in foreign countries for the very means of existence. — History will write their story with tears.

"Meanwhile the conquering troops spread themselves over Bohemia, pillaging all that belonged to the unhappy Protestants. One of the Bavarian bodies of horse was commanded at this time by a young volunteer, whose military talents and incredible daring, had raised him to the rank of captain, in the course of one campaign. His name was Roselheim.

"It happened that his dragoons were quartered in the district where Henrietta resided; and hearing that some Austrians, quartered there also, were guilty of some atrocious cruelties, he took upon himself the responsibility of checking them, and succeeded, after much personal risk.

"Shortly after this, the same Austrian corps, headed by their officer, who sought an excuse for pillaging the mansion of a rich heiress, broke into Henrietta's house of Zierendahl, at the dead of night, under the false pretence of seeking for suspected persons; and were proceeding to make themselves masters of every valuable it contained, when Roselheim suddenly appeared with his band hastily collected, and forced his way through the swords of his former comrades, to the chamber of its affrighted mistress.

"Henrietta had not suffered the terror consequent upon the forcible entry of these plunderers, to make her forget what was due to decency; she had dressed

herself completely: and whether that circumstance, or the modest dignity of her manner, awed her rude invaders, I know not, but they offered her no personal insult. The officer was however fiercely demanding her jewels, as a bribe for his respectful conduct, when Roselheim rushed bleeding in.

"His vehement threats of denouncing this unmanly conduct to the commander-in-chief, a man too brave to countenance the robbery of a woman, caused the officer to desist, and endeavour to excuse himself on the ground of secret information concerning a traitor secreted by the young heiress. Roselheim, with his usual address, seized this opportunity of avoiding an open quarrel with his brother soldier, and appearing to believe the story of a secreted person, undertook to assist in the search.

"He then led the assailing party out of Henrietta's apartment; leaving her to the contemplation of too pleasing an image,

the image of a brave and singularly-handsome young man, covered with wounds got in her service; risking his life, and at least his commission if his superiors should condemn his zealous humanity, and all for the sake of one whom he had never seen till this moment!

"The search terminated as might be expected. Roselheim had the felicitous art of quickly conciliating those by his invincible good humour and gaiety, whom his still better qualities might have provoked, and he dismissed the Austrians, therefore, in tolerable temper; remaining himself, with his own troop, to guard the lady.

"I should have told thee, my child, that at the commencement of this disastrous war, only such as were taken with arms in their hands, or men who refused acknowledging the spiritual power of the Pope, and the authority of the Emperor,

were imprisoned or banished, — the women of all ranks were allowed to stay.

"Thus, the orphan Henrietta, clinging to her home, and having no near relation, except an uncle in a remote country, remained in her own mansion, with no better counsellor than a very old and timid governess. Roselheim was now added to their party. One of his wounds proved serious; and this threw him upon Henrietta's hospitality for several weeks.

"I should tell thee, perhaps, my Meeta, that this young man was at that time distinguished for a degree of personal beauty marvellous in his sex; that his physiognomy was as prepossessing as his manners were noble and graceful; that a certain open look, an air of frank hilarity, promptitude to give, a temper of unalterable sweetness, seemed to offer sufficient pledges for the goodness of his heart. As a more convinc-

ing proof of his worth, he had certainly saved the lives and properties of several innocent persons, who, but for his energetic interference, would have been wantonly butchered by the Austrians; and yet more, he had incurred his present wounds by a disinterested defence of the friendless creature, who thus commented on his character.

"Roselheim, however, had originally been prompted to this gallant service, (as he afterwards told her,) by a tincture of romance in his disposition, — a relish for uncommon adventures, and for the notoriety attached to them, — a spirit which thou wilt see more clearly developed hereafter, and to which I sincerely believe he owes all the guilt of his latter days: the same spirit of romantic vanity heightened the passion which he naturally and instantaneously conceived for a creature as lovely as she was inexperienced and confiding. He avowed his love, while he confessed and deplored his poverty; and

asking nothing, he obtained every thing. She thought, alas, that to make him master of her fortune and herself, was but an act of duty: in short, in an evil hour, she became his wife."

"Why an evil hour? dearest father," asked the artless Meeta, "if he were so amiable, and so humane?"

"He had these virtues, I allow," replied Muhldenau, mildly; "but there are many higher ones necessary to constitute a truly good man. And besides, there are some selfish passions, which if suffered to dominate, can change the humane into the merciless. But there was one objection to Roselheim, which ought to have been imperative — he was a Catholic."

"Dear Sir, surely, I think, I have heard you say very lately —" Meeta faltered, and stopt from dutiful respect.

"Thou hast heard me say, my child, that even amongst Catholics, there are excellent persons: I repeat the asser-

tion. the circumstances under which we are born, the creed we are first taught, sometimes our utter ignorance of others, generally determines our religious belief; these things are unavoidable. Shall I then condemn a fellow-creature for being what he could not avoid? God forbid! But whatever be the different modes of worship, the same conformity with the laws of Christ is exacted from all who profess to reverence His name: and while one who dissents from me in doctrines, practises the true spirit of Christianity, I will joyfully call him brother. But should he not do this, I then see in him no longer a disciple of Jesus, but an impious idolator of papal impositions. Remember, therefore, that I could make a friend of any denomination of Christian. But in the close union of marriage, which we are told is to make one of two persons, I have always thought that a difference of religion teems with distress and danger.

In this instance, alas! my opinion has been sadly verified.

" In this instance too, there were other considerations growing out of the circumstances of the times. It was the commencement of a war, ostensibly religious; and during its continuance, the Protestant wife of a Catholic officer, must either expose him to the danger of suspicion from his own party, by inducing him to favour the members of her suffering church; or she must abandon all interest in her poor brethren, and try to behold their persecution and murder unmoved.

" But these are the after-reflections of an old man of sixty, widely acquainted with the variety of evils which may spring from one inconsiderate act; and we must remember that the orphan Henrietta, as yet, knew mankind only by books, or as she saw them in the pure mirror of her own soul. We must remember, that she had no other person's experience to guide her, and that a signal

obligation, appeared to sanctify the election of her heart.

" Be that as it may, the marriage of these very young people, for the bride was but twenty, and the bridegroom only two years older, was solemnized privately by the forms of her interdicted church, and publicly by those of his. The match was then a brilliant one for Roselheim; and his prince, the elector of Bavaria, to whom he had recommended himself by the surprise of an important fortress, was sufficiently interested in his good fortune, not to oppose it.

" The happiest of husbands, and I sincerely believe one of the fondest, Roselheim, when the campaign ended, carried his wife with him to the court of Bavaria. There her grace, her sweetness, that beauty, which though fading now, was then in its bloom, excited universal admiration, and gratified her husband's master-passion, a thirst for distinction in all things.

" It was soon after this that I became acquainted with her.

" Madam Roselheim had lain-in of her first child six weeks, when, anxious to show their son to its father, who was then on service in the Lower Palatinate and could not quit his post, she determined to visit him at the camp, and for this purpose, set out with the child and a few attendants from Munich. Towards the end of their journey, her people lost their way at nightfall, in the middle of a wide heath, where only one wretched house was to be seen. In that house, the dwelling of one who had formerly belonged to my father, I was concealed, waiting a favorable moment to escape back into Holland, whence I had been sent not long before, on a political errand, by my royal master.

" The house was at this moment a scene of awful affliction, the wife of its humble owner was dying on her husband's breast, after a premature labour,

while I was fulfilling the duties of my sacred profession by their side; and a girl of fifteen was vainly trying to keep life in the new-born babe, which the want of its mother's warmth, and of its natural nourishment, threatened with speedy death.

" Meanwhile, their younger sister, a girl of seven years, was just issuing from this scene, when Madame Roselheim's coachman stopt at the door, to enquire his road. The incoherent answers of this distressed child, and her loud sobbing, attracted our dear friend's notice. She soon drew from the little girl, that her mother was dying above stairs, that her infant brother must die also, since they had no milk to give him, and that she was going she knew not whither, to seek assistance.

" Alighting from her carriage, Madame Roselheim, at once obeyed the impulse of humanity, and preceded but a moment by the little girl with an offer of service, entered the sick chamber.

" Meeta, I am old now, and few things alter my temperate pulse; but even now, methinks, such another heavenly vision would cause it to beat with fervent admiration.

" I was on my knees at the head of the dying woman's bed, when the door opened, and presented a young creature, fair as an angel—looking like an angel.

" She advanced with a step like stealing dews, and speaking in a voice softer than falling Down. Never was dignity and feminine softness so blended, as in that face and figure! Never did human beauty appear so distinctly the transparent raiment of a more beauteous soul!

" I forgot, we all forgot, that every person's life in that house might pay the forfeit of my being found in it; and we remained where we were.

" Madame Roselheim, meanwhile, uttered a few tender words of comfort and advice about the mother, then hastening to

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the perishing infant, sat down, and put it to her breast: it ceased to cry.

"O my child! hadst thou seen the light that shone at that instant in the half-extinguished eye of the dying woman — seen the amazement, joy, and grief of the father — the frantic transport of the younger girl, and the speechless gratitude of the elder, thou wouldst have felt as I did, that Madame Roselheim was commissioned by Heaven itself.

"I will not dwell too much upon the remaining part of this incident, my Meeta," continued her father, seeing her bathed in tears of pity and admiration mingled, "a few words shall suffice. The poor mother died in less than an hour, though many judicious efforts were made to save her, by Madame's suggestions; who, however, gave up her own natural wish of speeding on to the camp, and remained in that dismal scene till the next day.

"During that time, the peasant child

shared her infant's nourishment; and I, acquainted by herself of her name, and relying confidently upon her humanity, confessed my perilous situation, and obtained from her the means of passing unmolested through the Bavarian lines."

"And what became of the baby, dear father?"

"It will grieve thee to learn, that it died in spite of Madame's tender nursing, not long before she left the house, but long ere the woman arrived, who had been sent to, at a great distance, to suckle it.

"Madame Roselheim, however, never lost sight of the family. She contributed liberally towards the comfort of the bereaved husband, though he made an imprudent marriage afterwards; and to the decent education of his daughters. One of them was in later years thy mother's maid, and the youngest is our friend's faithful Esther."

"Oh! no wonder she well nigh wor-

ships her mistress!" exclaimed Meeta, the bright expression of enthusiastic youth breaking through her tears, "I have often thought that Esther could go to death for Madame, and now I no longer doubt it. — But go on, dearest father, tell me more of this dear lady."

"What shall I say of her, for eight years after this time," resumed Muhldenau, "that she was happy? or that she only dreamt she was so? The Great Searcher of hearts, can alone know whether, during that period, Roselheim was a faithful or a deceiving husband; whether habitual infidelities had prepared his heart for the last barbarous act which broke their nuptial bond; or whether his ruling passion rendered him unable to resist the attack made upon his integrity, by a woman amply qualified to bestow on him both riches and honours?

"That point I cannot resolve, my Meeta, for I know this man only from his much-enduring lady's mild relation of his

actions, and from the actions themselves; the motives I forbear to judge.

"The continuance of war, and the military duties of Roselheim, now a Colonel —"

Meeta interrupted her father, asking why the war should last, after the King of Bohemia was driven from that kingdom.

"The war began, my dear child, because the Emperor, determining to extirpate the new opinions, as our purer doctrines are called, withdrew the toleration granted by his predecessors to their Protestant subjects: and it was continued after the reduction of Bohemia, first, because the Palsgrave's hereditary dominions were given to the Elector of Bavaria, who was obliged to secure them by force of arms; and afterwards, because the Emperor, still pursuing his aim at absolute power, both civil and religious, claimed from all the Protestant princes the restitution of certain secular bishoprics, which they held by virtue of a

solemn act of Charles V., and which enabled them to protect their people in the exercise of their own forms of worship. Till this last blow was struck, I grieve to say, that nearly all these princes left my poor master's dominions to the spoiler; never attempting to restore him, who had sacrificed himself for them all. It is indeed only within these ten years that they have learned to understand their true interests, and to know that the religious liberties of the whole body are menaced when those of a single member are invaded.

"At the period I mention, (the first three or four years after Madame Roselheim's marrriage), the war being feebly carried on by our party, allowed her much of her husband's society; and having succeeded in her wish of retiring to live upon her own beautiful estate in Bohemia, when he was with her, she had him almost wholly to herself.

"But, at length, longer and more dan-

gerous campaigns carried him more frequently away; and perhaps these absences tended to diminish his taste for the calm enjoyments of a settled fortune, and a home of secure affection.

"Meanwhile, they had lost their two first children in the cradle: but one delicate, though lovely boy, born the fourth year of their marriage, remained; and between this child and her husband Madame Roselheim divided her fondest attentions. In truth, her fond devotion to this husband, she has often told me, increased with time. Roselheim's bloom of youth had changed into the nobleness of manhood. The dangers of the field, and the business of the cabinet had developed the powers of his mind, and thus given dignity to the affection he inspired. The constitutional felicity of a temper, which no vexation ruffled, rendered him as amiable as admirable in his domestic circle; and equally adulated by the women for the extraordinary graces of

his person, as by the men for his military talents, his too-devoted wife habituated him to receive from her that worship, which, if paid at all, ought rather to be rendered to the weaker sex.

"Believing him worthy of the highest honours, our dear friend unconsciously fed the flame of that earth-born ambition, which now began to proclaim itself. She listened to his aspirations after distinctions, which could neither contribute to his real happiness, nor add splendour to the deeds that demanded them; never remarking then (for how entirely did she forget self?) that in such vain anticipations, his own aggrandisement was ever uppermost in his mind.

"It is certain that Roselheim's martial achievements, and the personal favor shown him, both by the Emperor and the Elector, authorised him to expect some honorary title at least. During a short visit to Vienna, his wife ventured to press one in power, for the reason of

this mortifying neglect; when she was bluntly told, that her religion was the obstacle. Fresh risings amongst the Protestants in Bohemia and Silesia, making it the Emperor's duty to discountenance every one professing their faith, or connected with those that did, made it impossible for his imperial Majesty to give any higher proof of his value for Colonel Roselheim, than that of permitting the Elector of Bavaria to continue him in military command.

"Unable to conceal the pain this information gave her, Madame avowed it with tears to her husband, lamenting the existence of any obstacle to his brilliant advancement; yet believing that he would, like her, be in a great measure satisfied that his services were duly appreciated, although they could not be openly rewarded. How was she shocked and amazed by his immediate wish that she would try to conform her opinions to his interests!

"From that hour, her peace, hitherto unmolested by any discussion of their different creeds, was disturbed by continued assaults of this idolized husband. At first, railleries, or blandishments mixed with specious reasoning; and lastly, reproaches of her lukewarm affection, (into which his natural sweetness of temper never allowed any bitterness of expression to enter,) cruelly tortured her heart, without alienating it. My child, if thou wouldst be loved, cherish thy present sweetness of temper. Believe me, temper is the corner-stone of domestic happiness; if that is of an unsocial sourness, talents are but mockeries, virtues charmless, religion itself a lifeless stock!

"Roselheim's amiable mode of urging a cruel suit, gave additional energy to his wife's regret that she could not yield it to him: and it was then she felt the punishment of her youthful fault. Had she not married a Catholic! but

she had done so; and it was now her duty and her desire, to take the only evil of the destiuy she had chosen, cheerfully.

"So powerful is the effect of a kindly humour, that Madame Roselheim confesses, the gentleness of her husband's importunities blinded her to the turpitude of their nature; so that making a natural illusion to herself, upon their motives, she believed him actuated by a mistaken zeal for her salvation, by a parent's longing for the aggrandizement of their little son, and by a wish to receive a decided proof of his Sovereign's regard. Thinking solely of that virtuous ambition which seeks deserved greatness, she never dreamt that her husband's was of that ignoble sort, which covets distinctions for their own sake.

"About this critical period, Roselheim was employed in the management of a private negociation, between the Emperor and the Elector of Saxony, who was suspected of an intention to espouse the

interests of his oppressed brethren, the Protestants, and call the King of Sweden to their aid. This business carried Roselheim at different times to the court of Dresden. Twice, during this period, he saw his wife; once at Vienna, and afterwards in Bohemia. She remarked afterwards, that never had she seen him so gay, as on the first of these occasions; nor ever so abstracted as he was during the last. Doubtless at one time he was exhilarated by flattered vanity and vague hopes; and at the other, debating with himself whether he should seize their offered advantages.

"When they met at Vienna, amongst the profusion of trifling incidents which after absence are naturally repeated by persons unused to have a thought from each other, Roselheim mentioned an amusing conquest which his person and celebrity had made of some unknown fair, in Dresden, who not merely vented her passion and despair in pathetic or

extravagant love-verses, but accompanied them with anonymous presents, as costly as beautiful. A splendid ring, a fine Arabian; and lastly, the insignia in brilliants, of the only order with which he was decorated, had followed each other in the course of three short months. He treated this extraordinary incident with pleasantry: but even then, doubtless, it had added fuel to his ambitious desires; flattered his romantic vanity; and given his thoughts a constant object of agreeable curiosity. Alas, my child! these jewels, these ridiculous, nay criminal love-letters, were the destruction of Madame's happiness eventually; though, at the time they were shown to her, she grieved only for what she thought the depravity of her own sex, little suspecting that it could ever taint the integrity of her husband.

"Roselheim returned to Dresden: and there, how he discovered that this impassioned incognita, and the young

widow of Prince Mathias of * * were one, I know not; nor know I how she wrought on him to take the iniquitous step she did.

" Among the causes to which I should conjecture his conduct may be attributed, be not surprized that I mention a weak dependance upon predictions.

" A belief in judicial astrology, and other impious fancies of that sort, is the disgrace of our age; persons whose understandings are unclouded upon every other subject, are children upon this.

" One prince, alas! accepted a crown because it was foretold that acceptance would be followed by infinite good to thousands; and another, authorised the murder of his most efficient minister, because a soothsayer interpreted a dream fatally to that minister's prejudice.

" I have taught thee, my child, to despise such credulity; thou wilt, therefore, scarcely credit me when I say, that two of the most renowned generals and

statesmen of my time, kept astrologers publicly in their suite, to calculate the position of the stars at certain periods, and to determine the issue of projected events.

" In the early days of our friend's union, Roselheim told his bride, that his happiness then, had been foretold him. Some pretender to prescience doubtless, looking in his handsome face, had assured him he would make his fortune by marriage; and Roselheim had thought the prediction amply realised by his union with a Bohemian heiress: but I fear his credulous belief fixed upon another object, when a higher one presented itself; and he yielded to his own guilty vanity, fancying himself only obeying a divine ordinance.

" The political events of those times, unhappily afforded Roselheim an opportunity of gratifying at once his ambition, and the illustrious widow's lawless passion. The Protestant princes who had

hitherto kept neuter, roused by the arbitrary act I mentioned before, requiring the restitution of certain church possessions, not only prepared to prosecute the war with vigour, but actually invited Gustavus King of Sweden into the empire.

" This measure exasperated the Emperor to such fury, that, amongst other most rigorous proceedings, he issued an edict of banishment against every female Protestant, whether married or unmarried, unless she should publicly recant her heretical opinions; forbidding their husbands, if Catholics, to have any species of intercourse with them, upon pain of confiscation of goods and land.

" This thunderbolt fell upon Madame Roselheim when her husband was at Vienna.

" Distracted with the present evil, yet relying confidently upon her husband's love, and much upon his influence with his Prince to get the sentence softened

in their case, she was preparing to remove into Brandenburgh; and was actually penning a letter, to entreat her husband not to abandon his country and his rights in a transport of rash affection for her, but to abide this trial, as she hoped to do, patiently; trusting in God, that a speedy peace would happily terminate the religious differences of the Emperor and his people, and restore her to her home: she was just penning this letter, when a heavier bolt struck her devoted head.

"In the same hour she received a formal notification of her husband's intention to divorce himself from her, on the score of their different creeds, unless she would pacify his alarmed conscience, and gratify his affection, by abjuring the faith of her fathers; and learnt that in the event of a refusal, she must deliver up her little son to that husband's order, and to the authority of the Emperor.

"The bearer of this piercing mandate

was Roselheim's new confessor, a Jesuit of remarkable subtilty and influence. He was commissioned, he said, to exhort and persuade Madame, to open her eyes upon her temporal as well as spiritual good: assuring her, that whether Roselheim had or had not acquiesced in their divorce, it was equally irrevocable; or rather that their marriage was now invalid. First, because it had originally been contracted when the Protestant forms were solemnly declared unlawful, (and to them they had privately submitted); and secondly, because the Emperor now thought fit to revoke the consent he had then given to their union according to the ceremonies of Rome. These circumstances rendered their child incapable of succeeding to their separate or joint properties! but to legitimate him, required only an act of the Sovereign; and that grace was promised, if the mother would abandon her religion.

"I must draw a veil over the anguish

of a wife and mother, in such an hour! that she lived through it, must be attributed to the especial support of the Divine Being. One of her old servants she has since lost, has told me that he remembers his lady was long, very long before she could be made to believe in those dreadful facts, and in her husband's perfidy: that when she did so, a sort of horrid stupefaction held her fixed for a yet longer time; till at last the frightful stillness gave way; and this gentlest of human beings, awakened from her dream of a husband's excellence, and vainly clinging to her child, became like some wild animal roused to the defence of its young.

"She protested that no threats should drive her from her home, the home of her ancestors; that no hand but her husband's should tear her son from her arms; and that she was ready therefore, to incur all the penalties of disobedience to the Emperor, and of fidelity to her religion.

That they might imprison, that they might bring her to the block, or bind her to the stake, but never should they force her into banishment, under the present circumstances.

" This lamentable frenzy, pardonable I trust, terminated in complete insensibility: a few faithful servants were then enabled to convey her from the house of her perverted husband into Brandenburgh; and there for some weeks she remained in a state from which her weeping friends thought she never would recover. It was not alienation of mind; but a strange, shall I say a merciful oblivion of every thing!

" When she revived to painful consciouness, the events of those weeks were told her by degrees. She was no longer the wife of Colonel Roselheim: their marriage was annulled; and he was become the husband of Prince Mathias's widow."

" Then I suppose this woman must

have been the most beautiful creature the world ever produced!" exclaimed Meeta, artlessly.

"At thy age, my child," said Muhldenau, indulgently, "it is pardonable to fancy beauty irresistible; but at Roselheim's, who was then two-and-thirty, it would not have been pardonable for him to have felt it so. Though, perhaps, the crime of abandoning her, who had been the wife of his bosom nearly ten years, was more detestable if the consequence of personal vanity, or calculating self-interest, than though it had been the fruit of intoxicating passion.

"This woman, however, had, I hear, very little more beauty, than youth and a commanding presence: but she began by flattering her victim's personal vanity; and she finished, by sacrificing to his vanity of another sort. Her love gave him eclat, and her influence could obtain him titles. I have told thee, Meeta, that Madame Roselheim had no near relations

alive in Bohemia. All her kindred were amongst the many hundred noble Protestant families whom the Emperor, after the reduction of Prague, had driven out to beg their bread in foreign lands. But her tender benevolence had reached them in those distant countries: and, debarring herself from those rich decorations, which young women naturally prize, she not only contributed largely to their relief out of the income allotted for her personal expenditure, but sold her jewels to do so the more bountifully.

"Her maternal uncle, Baron Falkenberg, having fled with a sick wife and three young children, peculiarly required her generous aid; and she liberally afforded it: so that the Baroness Falkenberg's life was lengthened some years, and Falkenberg himself enabled to buffet with fortune, till his merits advanced him to an honourable and profitable post in the household of the king of Sweden.

"Ten years were gone, since this fa-

mily left Bohemia; and there remained of them now, but the father and a little girl, born after his expatriation. The latter was in Danish Holstein, with a god-mother, by whom she was adopted; and the former was in the army of the great Gustavus, who had heard the call of the oppressed Protestants, and entered Germany.

"The tidings of his niece's unparalleled misfortune no sooner reached Baron Falkenberg, than he hastened to repay her former goodness, by his affectionate protection. He would have had her repose in Sweden or Holstein, amongst the friends he had made there: but she was languishing to hear of her little son; and hoping every day to receive a favourable answer to her petition of being permitted to see him, she resolved to dare the contingencies of war, and accompany her uncle to Magdeburgh, (one of the free Protestant cities,) which was threatened by the Imperialists,

and the defence of which was entrusted to her kinsman."

"What, my father!" exclaimed Meeta, "did our injured friend ask any thing from her husband?"

"No, my child; she refused every thing. Through the Jesuit's agency he informed her that the amount of her Bohemian income should be annually paid to her order by the bank at Hamburgh; and that whatever she wished from her former residence at Munich, should be sent whither she would. But Madam Roselheim mildly rejected both offers: and when she asked to see her son, stipulating that neither now nor hereafter, would she agitate the question of religious doctrines, but would abide by her marriage contract, and leave that point to God and his own reason, she made the request to the Emperor himself, as to the common parent of every German, and the sovereign arbiter of her husband's conduct. But

to these applications, though often reiterated, she never received any reply. Perhaps the Austrian court would not answer the virtuous woman, who, knowing she had been wedded by the laws of God and the forms of her own church, persisted in retaining the name thus given her, and of considering herself bound, even while her partner acted and called himself free.

" Meanwhile, the imperial army, under the Bavarian general Tilly, was advancing upon Magdeburgh, already menaced by Pappenheim, another of the Austrian commanders, and his experienced troops.

" Falkenberg, now appointed to the government of that city, had thrown himself into it, respiring ardour for the cause of religious liberty, even while he burned to revenge the wrongs of his niece.

" Alas, my child, how long must religion struggle with human passions in our hearts, ere she expel them all

" I believe this wish for vengeance, was the last dregs of mortal frailty in the breast of the noble Falkenberg. It caused the bitterest anguish to his poor niece; for she soon learnt that Roselheim was in the advancing army, (doubtless, ignorant of her vicinity,) and I suspect she became more resolute upon that account, in her determination of braving the siege. Perhaps, unknown to herself, she indulged the hope of interposing between those now mortal enemies, if they should meet upon the breach, or in the town. And who may blame this virtuous hope, even though it might be mixed with some fond remembrance of former happiness?"

" And did she never see her husband after his amazing abandonment of her?" asked the young Meeta; the tears of pity suspended in her eyes, by earnest expectation. " Surely, if she had, my father, some strange discovery must have been made. That bold woman at Dresden must have made him believe his wife

guilty of some dreadful act. I have read of such things."

"In romances, my Meeta!"

"In history too, dear father. Witness Herod's deception about his poor sons; and the sad story of that king of Naples, who was brought to condemn his innocent chancellor and dear friend, Pierre de Vignes."

"Thou hast an apt memory, as well as a retentive one," observed Muhldenau, smiling. Meeta pursued her imagination. "Surely something like this, must have wrought such a change in the once humane and affectionate colonel Roselheim?"

"Whether events really change character, or but develope it," replied her father, "only God knoweth. I am inclined to think they develope our nature. In Roselheim, it seems to me, we may trace back the flagitious action over the consequences of which, we are now pondering, to those seeds of romantic

vanity, which were noticeable in his earliest youth.

" Had such an opportunity not occurred, of gratifying it, the extent of that criminal weakness would have remained a secret to all, save himself."

" Oh, Sir, he must have changed to an opposite nature from his own! How else could he have acted with such needless barbarity, after he had gained the wicked distinction he sought, of marrying this prince's widow! to deny Madame the sight of her son! not to prepare her by degrees for the cruel blow he was meditating! Never to write to her afterwards, and lament the cruel variance of his interest, with his conscience and his affection!"

" My child, how little dost thou know, thank God, of life and its passions! all these, thy alleged proofs of Roselheim's entire change, are testimonies to the contrary. Had his naturally humane

heart been steeled to shame and pity of the sufferings he caused, he might have tried to soften the blow, as thou describest: but he knew himself unable to endure the alarmed love, or the actual distress of a wife who had once been the thing dearest to him. And in utterly proscribing her sight of their son I should suppose he had two reasons in view: one, the conviction, that if he would enjoy any oblivion of his crime, he must destroy the child's recollection of his mother, so that their future discourses might never contain her name. And the other reason may be found in his interest, which hung upon an apparent zeal for the religion menaced by her friends, and which might well be supposed indifferent to him, if he permitted his boy to hold any correspondence with a mother of adverse tenets. Thus thou seest, my Meeta, that without having less tenderness of nature than he really displayed, when the inexperienced Henrietta be-

came his wife, Roselheim had only more selfishness and vanity than was suspected; and that in the subsequent contest between these feelings and humanity, the strongest power prevailed.

"From these considerations, my child, we may gather this serious lesson: that when we receive constitutional virtues, in the place of principles, we lean upon slender reeds, which will fail us under the slightest pressure. We should therefore be scrupulously careful, before we form any intimate tie with others, to ascertain, whether the good we see in them, be real or assumed; and whether, if real, it be kept firm and consistent by a fixed sense of duty.

"This is the only rock, on which to build happiness; all other foundations are sand!

"But it gets late, my child!" added Muhldenau, noticing the changed appearance of things.

The moon, indeed, was now risen so

high, that in the place of her silver rays streaming in through the vines that latticed the window, and checquering the floor with their dancing foliage, only a solemn sort of twilight prevailed.

The apartment, however, was not quite dark, for the stars emitted feeble gleams, sufficient to shadow out the different objects within; and to show without, the dark and motionless canal, spreading its steel-like water between the tall rows of the trees on its opposite banks.

Muhldenau rose, "We'll finish this story to-morrow, Meeta, if thou canst rise betimes for it, not to interfere with the duties of the day. I'll be ready for thee in my study by seven o'clock."

With thoughts bewildered, yet occupied with all she had heard, Meeta mechanically took up the little bell, which stood on a bracket beside her father's chair, intending to ring for candles, but remembering to whom that bell once belonged, she held it irresolute.

The pause and the half-sigh which accompanied it, were not lost upon her father. "Yes, my child," he said, relapsing into tender retrospections, and replying to her thoughts, "that bell belonged to my royal master. How often has its sound summoned me to his closet, to share the devout communion of his truly christian spirit, with that Heaven, into which he is now, I trust, entered!"

Muhldenau took the little memorial from her hand, looked at it intently for some moments, then replaced it on the bracket, while the tears, which before only suffused his eyes, now rolled silently down his cheeks. Agreeable to the fashion of all royal furniture in that age, this bell was far too costly to be in harmony with the simplicity of a poor minister's parlour; but the associations with it, might well apologise for such discordancy. It was indeed remarkably handsome; being principally composed of silver, richly embossed towards the handle,

which was formed of ebony, curiously carved and gilt, and ornamented with thick tassels of crimson silk and gold.

It had formed the plaything of Meeta's childhood, or rather the object of her aweful admiration: the sight of it, and the privilege of ringing it, having been always the highest reward bestowed upon her infant merit, by her father. Since then, it had gradually fallen in her estimation, into the rank of other barely useful articles; but now she felt as if she could never touch it again, unaccompanied by feelings at once sad and respectful. Under this impression she stept to the door, and called the servant.

Jemima, prepared for the summons, entered almost immediately, with lights in two bright brass candlesticks, shining like gold. Christina, the second maid, followed with a prayer-book: one placed the candles, and the other the book, upon a stand in the centre of the room, and at that moment the clock struck ten!

Muhldenau then knelt down in the midst of them; and in a voice to which recent emotion gave peculiar pathos and earnestness, uttered a short but fervid prayer.

As he arose from his knees, Meeta affectionately hastened to give him the assistance of her arm: then taking up a light, she preceded him to his chamber door, where again he blessed her; and they separated for the night.

CHAP. III.

An exhilarating morning followed the tranquil moonlight of the night before.

A bright sun had only just dispersed the blue fog from the canal, and the hoar frost from the ground, when Meeta entered her father's little study. She found the fire in the stove, already glowing with such fervent heat, that she stept to the window and threw it open.

The air that entered, was fragrant with the breath of cattle, grazing on the rich pastures beyond; and it was vocal with the pleasurable sounds of early day.

The crow of cocks, the bark of village dogs, the creeking of teams, and the cry of boatmen; all that hum of life and movement, in short, which proclaims

awakened nature, came at once to her ear. She stood enjoying these rural sights and sounds, till she heard her father's chamber door open, and turning saw him enter.

She ran forward; and after respectfully pressing her lips upon his forehead, and then with freer indulgence of filial affection, returning his fond embrace, she asked the usual domestic questions about his rest and his health. These being answered satisfactorily, she sat down, and he resumed the conversation of the preceding night.

"Ere I begin to tell thee what befel Magdeburgh and our injured friend, it may be well to instruct thee briefly in my own fortunes, from the hour I first saw her, till that in which she and I met again.

"Having escaped back into Holland through her means, in the year 1622, I received my Prince's leave to espouse a wanderer for conscience sake, like myself, and long the sole aim of all my earthly

hopes, thy departed mother. She had suffered much from close attendance upon a bed-ridden and peevish father, yet had piously refused to take upon herself other duties, and absorb herself in other affections which might interfere with this most sacred one.

"I grieved; but I loved her the better for the motive of this resolution; and death releasing her unhappy parent at last, she became my wife.

"Happy, O, how happy, were the few short years for which she was lent to me! yet I might have foreseen their brevity. Her delicate constitution had feebly contended against the effects of watching day and night for many months, by the bed of one whom suffering and poverty soured — of one too dear to her heart not to pierce it, when he reproached her for omissions of which she never was guilty, except when she herself sunk overpowered with illness.

"She lived to bear me three chil-

dren; and then she was summoned to Heaven!"

"Dear father," said Meeta, as he stopt to recover his voice, "I never knew that I had lost more than a brother, besides my mother!"

"Yes, a sister!" repeated Muhldenau, in a hollow tone, his face assuming an ashy hue as he spoke; "Thy brother died while in arms. But thy sister—she died —I shudder to remember it.—Slaughtered, poor lamb! O slaughtered, slaughtered!"

"Merciful God!" and as the young Meeta unconsciously uttered this awful exclamation, she sunk upon her knees in an agony of amazement and horror.

"Beware, my child," said the old man, in perturbed accents, his hands trembling as he would have raised her from the ground, "beware of questioning the unsearchable decrees of Providence. I have been sorely tried, 'tis true; but it

was the will of God to try me, and I was born to submit to that will."

Awed by his manner, by his profound emotion, rather than by his reproof, Meeta reseated herself, with downcast eyes: still, however, they quivered convulsively under their lids; though she strove to repress the workings of her other features, and she did not trust herself with speech.

Muhldenau then laid his hand upon her arm with a wandering look, and as he did so, the colour extinguished in his face. He drew a shivering sigh.

"My spirit grows faint, my child, when I would tell thee the events of this darkest part of my life! so many sorrows, in so short a space! Deem not lightly either of them I lost, nor of my grief on their account, if I rest but a moment on the different calamities I have to detail.

"I anticipated events, when I spoke just now of thy mother's and sister's

deaths: I must go back to the period when the former was yet in life, and the other unborn.

"Thy little brother, however, now no more, was then just three years old, when we embarked at Leyden, with my royal master and his numerous family, upon Haerlem meer, for the city of Amsterdam. Our party were dispersed for the sake of accommodation, in different vessels. Prince Henry was, of course, with me.

"Dear to me as the offspring of mine own blood, the young Prince richly repaid my long care. Matured by sorrow and early reflection, his mind as well as his heart, promised a full harvest of virtues and of knowledge. He had lately attained the age to which thou art now arrived; a few short years more, and he would be fitted to share the counsels, and lighten the anxieties of his father! alas! alas! —

"Night came on when we were in

the midst of this dangerous sea, and such a snow-fog came with it, that the light of the ship's lantherns could not pierce their united darkness.

" The vessels ran foul of each other; and that which carried the King and Queen, with their younger children, ran down our smaller bark. Terror and confusion ensued. My wife, then big with her last child, fainted in my arms; thou wast clinging to my knees, terrified, poor babe, at thy mother's fears; every one was endeavouring to save themselves in the other ships.

" To preserve mine own, was *my* first impulse; but though nature tugged at my heart strings, I remembered the double duty I owed to my King and master, and I hurried to find the Prince.

" Alas! his drowning cries were the first sounds I heard, mixed with the splashing waters; and the last I was destined to hear from him!

"Precipitate with fear, the unhappy boy had missed his footing on the side of the other vessel, and fallen between the two.

"At the sound of those cries — they ring at this moment in my ear! I was plunging headlong after him, when thy piteous voice recalled me. — His cries were heard no more."

Muhldenau's voice died away with these words, and closing his eyes, he remained for many minutes leaning back in his chair, as if in solemn communion with the Great Disposer of life and death. — Meeta sat trembling and silent, and heart-struck. When her father spoke again, it was in a low and more governed voice.

"I thought that moment, the most dreadful of my life; but I lived to know a worse.

"We were nearly all saved; how, I remembered not even then; my own sorrow for Prince Henry's untimely end,

and the anguish of his parents, palsied my faculties, so that I was spoken to, and I heard not.

" The transports of the poor Queen's grief, who reproached me then for a neglect of which she weepingly acquitted me afterwards, were addressed to one who seemed no longer capable of taking cognisance of any thing. I was absorbed in the recollection of a moment, which often crosses my mind in my happiest hours, then, alas, most often! but my wife felt for her husband's injured loyalty, and yet more for the bereaved mother, whose distraction impeached it; so that finally exhausted by vain endeavours to console an affliction she shared so truly, and agitated by her own recent danger, her weak frame sank under it, and soon after our mournful landing at Amsterdam, she brought thy sister into the world, and died in giving her birth.

" After this stroke, my soul was grie-

vously darkened: the light of the Gospel seemed wholly withdrawn from me. But I felt that I was in darkness; I prayed for grace and comfort; and they were mercifully restored to me.

"But do not thou seek to check thy tears," Muhldenau added, hearing his daughter's stifled sobs, "thy mother deserved them; and they embalm her here."

The venerable mourner laid his hand upon his breast while he said this, and his eyes also filled with tears.

"When I lost thy mother," he resumed, "her last wish was, that should I ever be employed by my Prince, or by my own affairs, to cross the seas, while our children were of tender age, I would first, if possible, place them in a safe asylum with her sister, then canoness of a Protestant chapter in Brandenburgh.

"Two years after my Margaret's death, that moment arrived: it was the memorable year 1631, that which opened

with such glorious prospects for the oppressed Protestants.

" Invited openly by some of the German Princes, as I have said before, and secretly by others, the King of Sweden had entered Germany, at the head of a valiant army; as a conqueror certainly, but as conqueror's rarely are, as a deliverer!

" This truly noble Prince, having rescued Pomerania, reinstated the Duke of Mecklenburgh in his dominions, was advancing in full confidence of being joined by the Electors of Saxony and Brandenburgh, towards the Palatinate. Assistance having been promised also by England, my royal master purposed sending me thither, to hasten the expected troops, and sue for a loan of money. But ere he did so, he granted me permission to convey my motherless babes to their aunt.

" With this permission, I set out with thee and my poor little Frederica, accompanied only by thy mother's maid — Esther's sister.

"We had crossed Westphalia, and advanced into Saxony, when I heard of the taking of New Brandenburgh, by an Imperial general; and alarmed at the rumour of another hostile army behind us, I hastened to seek protection for my infants and myself, in the fortified city of Magdeburgh.

"When I presented myself to the governor there, he received me courteously, assuring me of protection: and kindly touched with my forlorn condition, and those of my two helpless innocents, he spoke of me to his niece. Her gentle heart melted at the mention of motherless babes; and hastening to offer them maternal care, she discovered in me the object of her former goodness.

"Our mutual recognition in such a scene, and under our peculiar circumstances, was sad indeed. Providence had seen fit to deal sorely with us both; and our sufferings doubtless, were written legibly on our faces.

"Only nine years had gone by since I first beheld her, and Madame Roselheim was still but in the full summer of her age; yet that angelic brightness and bliss with which I then saw her invested, was already changed into the touching sweetness and fading looks of an all-enduring saint.

"At her request, the brave Falkenberg assigned me apartments in his house; and from that day, both my children found in her a second mother.

"Comforted as I was, by this unexpected friendship, and soothed by the pitying attentions of a creature whose office on earth seemed to be that of binding up the hearts others had broken — a creature who forgot her own bleeding wrongs to minister even to enemies, I was anxiously watching a safe moment for carrying my children back into Holland, (to go forward would would now have been madness, since Brandenburgh also was become the seat of war,) when

Tilly with his formidable troops formally invested the city, and closed every avenue of escape. Nothing was left me but to commit myself and my precious babes to the providence of God, and abide the fate of the city.

" I need not waste time now, in explaining to thee all the reasons why the astonishing victories of the immortal Swede, had no happy influence upon the destiny of Magdeburgh; suffice it, that the fault lay with the timid Elector of Saxony, who though one of the princes by whose secret invitation the king of Sweden was come to relieve the oppressed Protestants, had continued to stand neuter. He refused the Swedish army a passage through his states, for the relief of that city; pleading in excuse for allowing the imperial troops free way to invest it, that his allegiance to the Emperor required obedience, and his own comparative weakness compelled him to it.

" It was not one of the least of our dear friend's griefs, when she heard this vacillating conduct attributed to the machinations of Roselheim's young wife. That wily woman's race were a branch of the Saxon family, and she was known to possess not only the opportunity, but the ability, of influencing her great kinsman, to the detriment of our cause.

" This suspicion was never disproved; and the enormous grants which were almost immediately bestowed upon her husband, seemed to corroborate it.

" While the great Gustavus was urging every argument of real interest, and of conscience, to induce Saxony to join him in succouring this devoted town, time wasted; the Imperialists had already blockaded it for two months, and the distresses of the inhabitants began to exceed description. Disease and famine consumed the garrison as well as the citizens. I will spare thee their frightful details.

" I need but tell thee, that in a scene like this, every personal sorrow is suspended, and that each fellow-sufferer becomes like our own flesh and blood. Madame Roselheim, tasked so lately to the utmost to support her own misfortunes, forgetting that she had any peculiar to herself, became engaged in every active part of Christian duty.

" While her brave uncle was repelling the enemy from the fortifications without, she was ministering to the wounded in the hospitals within; and comforting the friends of such as had fallen. My office was with the souls of our companions: and how many did I daily assist in their last struggle with our awful adversaries, sin and death!

" On the tenth day of May, the city was taken by storm. The assault had been made so unexpectedly, that it surprized the inhabitants in various occupations.

" Madame Roselheim and I were

among the crowd, just issuing from the doors of the cathedral, after morning service, when the cry that the walls were broken down, and the Imperialists entering, reached our ears. The tumultuous sights and sounds which followed this cry, left us not a doubt of the fact.

"In a moment, the multitude composing the congregation of the cathedral were dispersed: some flying to save themselves; others, anxious only to reach objects dearer than themselves. I knew that *my* treasures were at home with their maid, and that the Governor's chivalric defence of the town, must render his dwelling the first scene of plunder and destruction. In a state of mind which chills my blood to remember, I besought Madame Roselheim to await my return in the house of God, where there was little to invite plunderers, while I should endeavour to reach my helpless children, and bring them to her arms. We thought but of perishing all together!

"For a brief moment, she insisted upon going with me to seek her valiant uncle. I represented how vain and useless would be such rashness; since his duty must fix him in the very thick of the carnage, where her affection could not reach him; and thus my babes might lose their only comforter, if any evil befel her.

"Won by my earnest prayers, and nearly stupified by the horrid sounds without, she consented to await me near the communion-table. We exchanged a dismal embrace and benediction, for neither of us expected to meet again in this world; and thus we parted.

"O my child, how shall I describe, but why should I describe, the dreadful scene I beheld, when I entered upon the streets! Troops galloping and firing upon the flying inhabitants, as if in the field of battle! terrible figures, with countenances like evil spirits, their horses already steaming with slaughter! impre-

cations and blasphemies, shrieks and prayers sounding in my ears; the streets running with blood, eddying round heaps of massacred persons. Frantic women casting themselves from the windows and tops of houses, into which soldiers were bursting; lost children calling in agony for their parents; infants torn from the very breasts of their mothers. — O my God, pardon this agony of recollection!"

The aged Muhldenau, quite exhausted by present and recollected woe, stopt abruptly, and leaning his head back, looked up to Heaven with eyes full of agony.

Meeta, pale and trembling, her eyes extinguishing with excesss of terror, laid her hand upon her father's, and tried to speak; but her quivering lips were incapable of utterance.

Many minutes elapsed before either father or daughter recovered; Meeta at length spoke.

"And could I ever be in such a scene and forget it? Yet I think I do remem-

ber, what I used to fancy must have been a terrible dream. A moment when I laid hold of some one's apron with a baby in their arms, and saw a fierce man in red seize her by the hair. After that, I remember nothing."

Her father now drew a sigh that shook her heart as well as his: he looked up again to Heaven, and said a few words to himself, but in so low and broken a voice, that Meeta could not hear them. After a while he resumed.

"After that, I met thee, my child, sobbing and wandering by thyself through the streams of blood in the principal street. Distracted between joy and grief, I caught thee up in my arms, and tried by thy imperfect directions to find Agnes and thy sister. But alas! alas! I sought in vain.

"Dismal was that long and hopeless search! Wherever I turned my eyes, they encountered persons whose faces had become familiar to me; many, too, that I

knew well, either lying dead across my path, or running wildly like myself in search of lost kindred. Every where I heard the shrieks of the wounded, the groans of the dying, the weeping of the bereaved, mixed with the horrid laughter and mockeries of our destroyers. I shall never forget those sounds! O my child, the anguish of seeing so many sufferers, knowing that there was no help for them, nor for myself! Feeling that we were all overtaken by a terrible judgment of Providence either for our own sins, or for those of our companions!

"Awe-struck by this last conviction, I checked my desperate lamentations, and pursued my way.

"By this time I was bleeding fast; for in my frantic hurryings to and fro, I received several sabre cuts from the wanton soldiers as they rushed along to plunder, and worse than plunder. Once, having sheltered thee under my gown, I was stopped and rifled by a ruffian Croat,

who, not content with the booty of my purse, aimed a savage blow at my last blessing. I saved thy precious head, with the cost of a little more blood: his sabre fell upon the arm that would have pressed thee into thy father's heart, had that been possible!"

Bathed in tears, Meeta eagerly riveted her lips to this protecting arm; her heart was too full for words. Her father's eye bent towards her with the fondest expression: once or twice he tried to begin again to speak, and as often suffocated a sigh; — at length he resumed.

"The city was now in flames in several quarters: by God's providence the great smoke it occasioned, beat down by a heavy atmosphere, occasioned a partial darkness, under cover of which, I found my way back to the cathedral. But the intense heat of the fiery vapours, as I hurried along, was nearly insupportable; and what with the scorching of the fire, with the bleeding of my wounds, and

the great misery of my mind, I must have sunk under it, had not the desire of placing thee in safety, and then returning to seek thy sister, given me strength to go on.

" I found a crowd of unfortunates, like ourselves, gathered together with Madame Roselheim in the cathedral; and I had but just power to impart my heavy affliction, when I fainted with loss of blood.

" My wounds being bandaged by that tender friend with her handkerchief and apron, when her other cares restored me to sense I would have gone again in search of my Frederica, but our companions in misery had now barricadoed the church-doors, determining not to open them till the first fury of the savage Imperialists should be sated. No entreaties, therefore, could prevail on them to allow me a passage.

" At such a moment, a father's agonies even thou, canst not imagine!

" But soon thy sufferings, my Meeta,

from another cause, recalled my wandering senses from the contemplation of my lost or slaughtered Frederica. For two days, some hundreds of us remained in that church without food of any kind.

" All this dismal time Madame Roselheim and I, had nothing to give thee to eat, except a single apple, and a few small cakes which we found in thy little pocket. Couldst thou have drunk thy father's tears, my child, —"

The old man's tears, which now flowed profusely for the first time since he began this narration, interrupted him afresh.

" O my father! what you have gone through for your little-deserving Meeta!" and as the young Meeta spoke, she threw herself impetuously upon his neck, and wept with convulsive violence.

Having yielded with her for some time to this salutary relief, Muhldenau gently disengaged himself from his daughter's arms, and looking sadly upon her waving tresses, said, " I went into that church,

my Meeta, with hair as bright and as brown as thine own; I came out of it with the white locks thou seest."

Meeta uttered a sort of cry. Nothing had painted the excess of her father's sufferings like this unexpected stroke; and the feelings it aroused, for some time mocked her father's mild authority to controul. She wept, she sobbed; she kissed that grey hair again and again; and ventured in her wild exclamations to question the decrees of Heaven.

The pious Muhldenau hastened to chasten this ungoverned sensibility: and as he continued to enforce the duty of Christian submission under the heaviest dispensations, her transports subsided; and calm, through weeping still, she recomposed herself to listen. Muhldenau resumed.

"On the third day, the conquering generals entered the town in triumph, and a stop was put to the carnage of the inhabitants. The persons found in the cathedral were taken prisoners

to the different camps of the Imperial army; and Madame Roselheim happily mistaken for my daughter, was conveyed with me and my child, amongst many others, into the quarters of the Commander in Chief. I was careful to conceal her name and rank from our captors, as long as possible; since I knew not to what new evils she might otherwise be subjected, and I dreaded a rencontre with her perfidious husband.

"This trial, however, was spared. General Roselheim had received a severe wound while mounting the breach, and was thus spared the guilt, perhaps, of assisting in, or the pang of being present at the noble Falkenberg's death: — that brave soldier fell not half an hour later; and expired soon after, amid the flames of the burning city. We learnt both these events, as the Austrian guard marched us to their lines, through the ruins of the town; and Madame's bitter tears for her uncle, were doubtless mixed with many

natural ones for the possible danger of him she had once loved too fondly.

"What a march was ours! — Nearly fainting with long fasting, and alarm for those from whom we had been separated during these dismal days, we were yet, alas! but too keenly alive to the desolation and misery around us! — Nothing but destruction was to be seen, — nothing but lamentation heard! — Even then it brought to my mind the tragical fate of Jerusalem, when Rachel wept for her children, and would not be comforted, because they were not.

"When we were lodged in the camp, and left to ourselves, I rallied my bewildered senses, and trying to shake off the sore burden on my heart, bethought me of the duties still left me to perform: — these were, to extricate thee and our friend from bondage, and to rejoin my royal master.

"In convassing the means of this, Madame suggested proposing a ransom for

myself and thee, to be paid after my return home, where alone I could raise the money; offering herself to remain as surety for the fulfilment of my engagement. Meanwhile, she gave me the only valuable she had about her, (the diamond-setting of a picture,) with which to tempt the officer by whom we had been taken, to trust me out of his hands.

"Thou mayst be sure I rejected the first generous proposal; but I gladly accepted the second, meaning to make it the sole offered ransom for us all: and as Madame was now deprived of her last protector, her uncle, she agreed, in the event of our joint liberation, to accept my protection into Holland, and become one of my diminished family.

"Providence graciously ordained our deliverance upon easier terms than we contemplated. A fire, which even history may term a judgment on our savage enemies, broke out in their camp, and

amidst the confusion produced by that circumstance, we contrived, with several others, to escape, and reach the Swedish lines.

"Thence we easily procured a safe conduct into Holland, which we reached without accident or delay; and having deposited thee and Madame with my kind Dutch friends, I returned into Germany to my royal master. Except in the single instance of Magdeburgh, the arms of the Protestants had been fortunate. The magnanimous Gustavus, having reinstated the Duke of Mecklenburgh, and obliged the Electors of Saxony and Brandenburgh to take an open part in the cause they secretly favoured, had possessed himself of Bohemia, and so secured the power of stipulating for the return and free consciences of the exiled inhabitants. He was now master of the two Palatinates, and was already in full march to the Bavarian capital.

"Summoned by this generous ally to

re-enter his own dominions, my prince hastened to obey, and had the satisfaction of being once more welcomed by his former subjects to the palace of his fathers.

"Bavaria soon fled before the conquering Gustavus; and the prospect of a peace securing the religious and civil rights of every denomination of Christians, was gladdening every patriotic heart, when the immortal Swede fell in the victory of Lutzen!

"I was at Mentz with my master, when this thunderbolt shot from that cloudless sky: he survived the mysterious blow but ten days!

"Thus did the world lose, almost at the same moment, two of its best princes; both were in the prime of their age; both left wives who loved them as queens rarely love: but there the parallel stops. The short span of the great Gustavus's life was bright with success and glory; that of Frederick, darkened by public dis-

asters and by private griefs. They seemed born to give mankind examples of Christian virtue, equally tried by the extremes of adversity and prosperity: doubtless both are now wearing immortal crowns of equal brightness."

Muhldenau now sunk into a fit of deep abstraction, which Meeta did not interrupt by a single exclamation. Her thoughts, indeed, were solemnly engaged by all she had heard: and in the wider scenes of far-reaching calamity, which her father's narrative had incidentally given her glimpses of, she lost for a while her keen interest in Madame Roselheim's domestic afflictions.

Muhldenau quickly renewed this interest, by re-awakening her gratitude.

"The death of my honoured prince," he said, heavily sighing, "ended my close connection with his family. His queen and her children found a home at the Hague with our virtuous Stadtholder; and I, attached to the people who had

first sheltered us when driven from our own homes, glad to lay my weary head, or rather heart, upon a pillow of rest, I thankfully acceded to the wish of my Dutch friends, and became the shepherd of my present flock.

"This village was recently built at that time, and all the houses were inhabited by the kindred or tenants of my earliest Dutch connections.

"Here, in this peaceful haven, for nine years, the rumour of war has reached me, but like the far-off roar of the stormy ocean from which I am escaped. Thy halcyon smile, my Meeta, has often calmed the wild recollections of that sea on which I once was wrecked. Often when I was ready to utter impious complaints over what I had lost, I looked at thee and Madame Roselheim, and felt how much I had preserved!

"That friend, beyond price or praise, became a daughter to me— a mother to thee: devoting her whole benevolent

soul to the care of thy education and health, she would have been happy, and I would have been happy, could the one have forgotten that she had a son, and the other that he *had* had another daughter."

"And has Madame ever seen this son, since he was so cruelly forced from her?" asked Meeta, anxious to draw her father's thoughts from the fate of her little sister, even while her own were sadly full of it: "has she never written to him — nor tried to see him?"

"I will explain why she has made no efforts of the sort," returned Muhldenau.

"So early as the year 1626, Roselheim's only surviving brother embraced the New Opinions, as the Catholics call our religion: he was then a subaltern in the Weimarian troops, and has since constantly borne arms under the Dukes of Saxe Weimar.

"The difference of their religious sentiments gradually estranged the bro-

thers; and their connection broke entirely, when the younger divorced his unoffending wife, and married a Catholic.

"Melchior Roselheim, the one I speak of, from the moment he discovered where to find his sister-in-law, sent her, from time to time, small presents of money, which have always been sufficient to gratify her blameless pride of independence. —These, he becomingly sent as slight acquittals of her bountiful presents to him, in his less prosperous days; they did not, therefore, wound her delicate feelings.

"This affectionate, yet somewhat rough friend, though violently renouncing all intercourse with his brother, took the trouble to discover for her, that her son was placed with the Benedictine Fathers, at their College, in Saltzburgh: and as Roselheim's new wife bore him no children for the first eight years, our self-denying friend hoped that her Rupert was destined to inherit the

titles and estates of his father, and feared to step in between him and what she still fondly thought his right, by yielding to her own desire of claiming his filial love.

" It is true, by the Papal bull which rendered her marriage invalid, Rupert was illegitimated. But the very provisions of her union with Roselheim had determined that their offspring should be educated agreeably to the customary rule in such cases: consequently, Rupert's religious creed could be no obstacle to success, should his father hereafter apply for an edict to reinstate him in his birthright.

" Alive solely to her maternal duties, and to her son's interests, Madame Roselheim believed that both required her to sacrifice selfish wishes. 'If I rashly endeavour to see this darling boy,' she said to me one day, 'I must either render it impossible for him to remain under the protection of a father, whom till

then, most likely, he has loved and honoured; or I must appear before him as a mother who should blush to own she is one. My great emotion, and his surprised feelings, might prompt him to take a step he might afterwards repent of: so, if at ripe age, unbiassed, unsolicited, he should prefer his mother and obscurity, to his father and the world, then, should he voluntarily seek me, then will these arms open, O how gladly, to receive him!'

"And by this principle has she continued to act, still pursuing her daily course of usefulness, yet never withdrawing her eyes from the one anxious object of her son's maturity."

"And how old is this Rupert, now?" asked Meeta, eagerly.

"But sixteen; and now with small prospect of ever being tempted to sell his conscience for a birth-right."

"That letter, which thou sawest Madame receive some time ago, when she

quitted the table so abruptly, came from Melchior Roselheim. It informed her, that in consequence of a severe wound in the head, he was come to a fortress on the Rhine, where the slight commission of superintending the progress of some military works, was allotted him, until he should be in a state to rejoin the acting army.

" In this letter, he further informed her, that a son had lately been born to his brother; and that Rupert, who had hitherto been educated as though he were one day to take an important station in life, was now avowedly destined for the priesthood. It was this news which rendered our dear friend so unlike herself, for two days. The birth of this child, seemed to divorce her a second time from her husband; it seemed to take from her at once, all of his heart, which yet must have lingered with the mother of his only child."

" And can our dear Madame con-

tinue to love such a wretch?" exclaimed Meeta, with that youthful impetuosity of feeling, which would think moderation a crime.

"Doubtless she does, in a degree," replied her father: "thou hast yet to learn, my daughter, that the heart is more surely and entirely weaned from a strong affection, by repeated acts of minor unkindness, or by continued proofs of chilling indifference, than by a single enormity, however atrocious. — We cannot combat the touching memory of countless testimonies of attachment, and of amiableness, merely by one opposite remembrance: time only can effect this, by rendering such delightful remembrances fainter and fainter.

"I read Madame's re-awakened tenderness in the perpetual suffusion of her eyes, while she and I discussed the point in question: but she gave no utterance to it. Never, indeed, have I heard her dilate upon any of her feelings. O no!

she would not add the weight of a feather, to the load of any human heart!

"Often, often, when she is smiling at thy happy spirits, my Meeta, seeming to lend her whole heart to their influence, I can see by her suddenly saddened eyes, that the image of her young son, or that of her husband in his days of joyous youth, has risen uncalled into her mind.

"I never notice to herself, either that touching look, nor the soft sigh which dismisses the image. Be her griefs sacred! never will they be poured out freely, save to Him alone who knows for what gracious purpose they were ordained."

"And would it grieve her, my father, to discover that you have made me acquainted with them?"

"No, my child; she knows that thou wast to hear them some day. I simply inform thee now of this peculiarity in her character, that thou may'st not mistake

it hereafter, for a proud dislike of sympathy, or for want of affection.

"Many excellent persons have I known, many admirable ones, but never any, who like her, restrained the yearnings of a naturally-confiding nature, solely to save her friends the poor pain of a few sighs."

"To think," exclaimed Meeta, uttering her thoughts unconsciously, "that my dear father and this matchless woman have had such sad lives, and all mine has been so happy!"

"All thine, my child," repeated Muhldenau, with a pensive smile, "a life of fourteen years! but God grant that after it has been prolonged many, many more, thou may'st still find happiness in the noiseless joys of home, and the repose of an unreproving conscience!"

Meeta kissed her father's hand; then after a moment, said, "and may I ask whither Madame is now gone from us?"

"She is gone to meet her brother-in-

law Melchior; anxious to minister to his comfort during the confinement necessary for the cure of his wound, and languishing to speak with him of her son.

"The idea of that son being destined for the priesthood, alarms her maternal feelings. She justly fears, that educated by the severest of the Roman Catholic fraternities, if once he assumes their habit, he will never see ought in his mother but a heretic properly degraded from her rank as his father's wife, by her obstinate adherence to pernicious doctrines. *She* can never address her husband again; but she thinks his brother might, upon such an occasion, without compromising the dignity of high principle; and that by his arguments perhaps, the Count of Rhinegravestein, (as they say he is now,) might be induced to wait Rupert's riper age, ere he plunged him into the solemn engagements of a religious life. But the day is advancing, and our little household

will soon assemble; we must therefore leave the profitable remarks growing out of this history, for a future theme.

"What we have been talking of, will not indispose us for our morning duty; but we both require a few moments to collect ourselves, ere we address our prayers to God. Retire, therefore, my child, retire to thine own apartment till prayer-time."

So saying, the venerable man kissed her tearful cheek, and dismissed the young Meeta, for the seriouspurpose he counselled.

CHAP. IV.

WHILE these affecting details were repeated by Muhldenau to his daughter, in the peaceful village of Mariendorpt, one of the persons most interested in them, was making his eager way through warring armies, towards the Rhine.

Guided by the intrepid Esther, Rupert assumed the disguise of a woman, as the one most likely to conceal him, should pursuit follow the discovery of his flight. Yet, although this dress would, in all probability, save him from detection by his father's vassals, he felt that it might prove pernicious to him amongst licentious and disorderly troops. Esther confessed that in forcing her desperate passage into Bavaria instead of journeying to her father's, she had encountered the great-

est difficulties, principally on account of her sex: yet added, that as she then travelled at her own wild hazard, and had no means of claiming protection from the friendly states through which she passed, she had been equally terrified by friend as by foe. She thought their best safeguard now, would be Rupert's appearing in his own character, so soon as they should have got completely out of Bavaria.

To this advice, a serious obstacle opposed itself. Rupert's only habit was the college gown of the Benedictines; and to reassume that, would be to mark himself for certain destruction. For, if the armed Protestants were more zealous in defence of its doctrines, than careful to obey the merciful precepts of their religion, a Catholic badge would probably cost him his life. He determined therefore to present himself boldly to the first camp of theirs which he might fall in with, and at once declare his name and errand,

and request some watch-word which might give him free passage through all their lines.

This opportunity soon occurred. In Suabia he encountered a body of Swedish troops under a young colonel, who listened to his brief history with prompt kindness: and though this officer made exceeding merry both with Rupert's disguise and handsome companion, he would have pressed on him his horse, his purse, and several minor accommodations, had Rupert felt inclined to receive such obligations from a stranger. But the latter, gratefully acknowledging these offers, received only the safe-conduct: and following the advice given him by the cavalier, made direct to that part of the Rhine, where the bank was commanded all along to the place of his destination, by the army of the union.

Embarking there, he proceeded down that majestic river.

Even amidst the haste and apprehen-

sion of their first flight, and now that they were carried forward without dread or difficulty, Rupert listened with avidity to the discourse of Esther.

Nature had given this young woman a mind as extraordinary as her person. Strong sense, coupled with so much stronger feeling that upon all emergencies she rarely acted prudently, yet never unwisely — marked her character: strength far beyond her sex, yet united with much beauty of countenance and figure, distinguished her appearance. Whenever her impassioned heart led her to adopt a wild scheme for attaining some coveted object, her powerful intellect enabled her to conduct it ably: and the capacity of her body for enduring every species of fatigue, privation, and change of weather, made enterprises within her reach, which would have been impossible to another woman.

The attachment she felt for Madame Roselheim bordered upon idolatry. The

image of that gracious lady in all her beauty, on the night when Muhldenau first saw her, had been the secret object of the young Esther's worship, through the years which intervened between that period and the one which banished Madame Roselheim from her lawful home. This devotion had been nourished by the complete retirement in which Esther lived; by the contrast of such a delightful image with the reality of a harsh step-mother, and a cheerless home; and by the frequent tokens of benevolent remembrance which that lady sent to her family.

In the seventeenth century, and in a country torn by intestine divisions, domestic news, even of the great, did not travel far, or quickly. Thus, Esther knew not of Madame Roselheim's unmerited disgrace, until she heard of it in the same letter from Muhldenau, which imparted the melancholy fact of her sis-

ter's calamitous disappearance at Magdeburgh.

To the extravagant and natural grief excited by both these events in the heart of Esther, succeeded a determination to go and beg her bread, if necessary, with her former benefactress. With little difficulty she obtained her father's leave to do this; and disdaining control from her step-mother, she made her way on foot nto Holland; where throwing herself at Madame Roselheim's feet, with tears and entreaties she gained permission to devote herself to her changed fortunes.

From this time the faithful creature, without presuming to seek any portion of her lady's confidence, acquired by the observation of true affection, so just a perception of her feelings, that she was often enabled to act by her lady's restrained wishes, when the latter would have scrupled to give them utterance.

In the present instance, certainly, Esther had well divined the yearnings of

a mother's heart. The wounds of that deeply-pierced heart were opened afresh by the news that her husband was made a father by another wife. Those wounds bled visibly and violently; and Esther saw that no hand could close them, except that of her son.

Fired at once by the resolution of going straight to this son, and proving to herself whether he were a base party in his mother's disgrace, or whether he were kept in ignorance of her existence and abode, she obtained her lady's permission to leave her under the protection of Colonel Roselheim, while she went to visit her aged father in the Palatinate. This point gained, she struck at once across Germany into Bavaria.

The event of her journey has been shown: and never did broken merchant returning with his lost cargo from distant and dangerous seas, bring it into port with greater joy, than she brought her young companion to the gates of

Ehrenfels. Rupert's heart was full to overflowing, with her contrasted pictures of his mother's past and present mode of life; her eulogiums on that mother's sweetness of disposition, to which his own claimed kindred, and which Esther believed, rendered her incapable of bearing resentment against her cruellest foe.

This virtue, however, though Esther sincerely praised, she rarely practised herself. Her resentments were as deep and lasting as her attachments: and now in proportion as Rupert won upon her affections, her mention of the unoffending child by which he was supplanted, increased in bitterness.

Esther, however, was happily taciturn by nature, and it was only under the painful influence of great occasions, that her feelings vented themselves in words: then, indeed, her language flowed with the impetuosity of a torrent. Thus Rupert knew less of her discontents than her

raptures; and instinctively avoiding the failings of human character, always succeeded in turning her momentary inspirations of eloquence, into the channel of his mother's praise.

It was late in the autumnal day, when they reached the entrance of Ehrenfels. Esther's name as servant to Madame Roselheim, and Rupert's passport from the last camp of the union through which they had passed, admitted them directly. Esther, as if returned only from her father's, proceeded to her lady; while Rupert enquired for Colonel Melchior Roselheim, and requesting a private conference with him, was shown into a small office room, which his uncle soon entered.

Not aware of the person he was to meet, and never having seen his nephew since the latter was an infant, Melchior gravely enquired his visitor's name and business. Rupert, in a hurry of spirits which nearly took away his breath, abruptly answered,

" Sir, I am your nephew Rupert; come to seek my dear mother."

" My nephew Rupert!" reiterated the plain-spoken soldier with more astonishment than pleasure, " My nephew Rupert! — so, — so, young man, you are at last roused to a sense of what you owe to the best woman in the world. I hope it is a genuine good feeling that brings you here; for if it is only vexation on finding yourself cut out by the birth of Rhinegravestein's new heir, you may return whence you came; the proud Count's brother, has neither lands nor titles to bequeath you."

Rupert was too inexperienced in human character, and of too tender a disposition, to stand this first assault upon his feelings unmoved: with dismayed looks, but a firm voice, he replied, " Sir, I was always given to understand that my mother was dead. And though I cannot exactly remember that I was ever told in absolute words, that she was not

married to my father; (here the Colonel uttered a hasty oath) I was made to believe so, by the assurance that she was a heretic, and I an illegitimate child." "Are you quite sure of this?" asked Melchior, fixing his eye on him.

"Quite sure, Sir." And as Rupert spoke with his hand on his heart, he lifted his hitherto downward-looking eye, and fixed it firmly on the questioner. There was no doubting that eye; and the Colonel at once opened his arms to him.

"You are of true metal after all!" and hesitating no longer, he gave him the cordial embrace of kindred.

After this, he proceeded to interrogate him closely upon several important points; and soon made himself master of every particular, necessary to establish the youth's innocence of base policy.

Meanwhile Rupert's impatience to see his mother, increased with every word. Although each sentiment uttered by his uncle, was good and honourable in itself;

and although he showed a thorough desire to serve his nephew, and perfect satisfaction in the strong step he had taken; there was so much roughness in his manner, good humoured as it was, such a total absence of the fine sympathies and gentle graces, that Rupert's heart shrunk back like a tender exotic brought into the rude open air: he yearned for the tears and tenderness of a mother; such a mother as Esther had assured him his was; and whose image still reflected, though dimly, by memory, was of a kind to awaken the most endearing ideas. After repeated hints of this natural longing, he found courage at length to entreat his uncle would prepare her for his appearance.

But this task, Esther, impatient of their long interview, had already taken in some degree upon herself; and with mingled joy and apprehension, had informed her lady, that a young man was come to the fort, with news of her son.

Amazed, transported, winged with sudden hope of hearing that she was at last to see this only object of her daily thoughts and nightly dreams, Madame Roselheim flew from her apartment, to that where she believed her brother likely to be; and entering at the moment when he was about to seek her, espied a person standing behind him.

"Sister! sister! this way a moment!" exclaimed Melchior, seeing the direction of her eye, and aware that some preparation was necessary; "that youth yonder"—"Brings me news of my son," interrupted Madame Roselheim, advancing eagerly.

Rupert retreated; for his quick-beating heart, beating at the sound of that penetrating voice as though it would burst its way to his mother's feet, seemed to himself almost audible.

Madame still advanced. She spoke again. At the second sound of her voice, Rupert unable to contend further with

himself, turned his head to look at her; at that movement, Madame Roselheim uttered a cry of transport, "It is my son himself.!"

The expression, not the features of his face told her who he was; and falling upon his neck, she faintly added, "now can I die in peace, for now I have seen thy face!" With these affecting words her senses forsook her.

Rupert continued to hold his mother upon his breast, and to gaze on the blissful smile, which even in this death-like suspension of every faculty, parted her lips. Tears of which he was unconscious, were meanwhile raining from his eyes over her motionless form, while every fibre of his own, trembled.

But his uncle was more active; and repeating in a voice hoarsened by agitation, and honest sympathy, "never fear, man; she'll soon be better;" opened a window and admitted the outward air.

The fresh night-wind blowing off the

cold waters of the Rhine, by degrees, rekindled life in Madame Roselheim, and she unclosed her eyes. The joy that had sealed them for awhile, was still beaming there: a few broken murmurs expressive of gratitude to heaven, came from her at intervals, as she continued to sit resting her now risen head on Rupert's shoulder; contemplating him often; and at every fresh survey, pressing his agitated hand in both hers.

"After ten long years, I see you again, my son!" she softly breathed.

"Yes, my mother! never, never to belong to any but you. Yet I have never had the least unkindness, or neglect to complain of!" he added, as if already he knew enough of his mother's heart, to expect that testimony would please her.

Madame Roselheim sighed, while she smiled; then turning her head towards the Colonel, said gently, "will you forgive me, brother, if I ask you to leave us together for a little while? Just now we

are only fit to be by ourselves." "Certainly, certainly!" was Melchior's hurried reply, "I will come back at supper-time." And saying this he left the room.

As if mutually acknowledging that hitherto they had been restrained, both mother and son precipitated themselves anew into each other's arms. Those tender appellations, were repeated again and again by each, as though they could not sufficiently assure themselves that such sacred relations did actually belong to them.

After long indulgence of these natural transports, the mother and son sat down to discourse more calmly.

Madame Roselheim had much to enquire, and more to curb herself from asking. Meanwhile Rupert, with the tact of real sensibility, quickly perceived what parts of his short history she would wish him to avoid; and he contrived therefore, without naming his father, and rarely mentioning his consort, to prove

distinctly to his mother, his own ignorance of her existence.

Madame Roselheim listened to him with a pensive calmness, which however gave way sometimes, when she learnt that her son had been left to imagine himself the offspring of a criminal connexion: her colour flushed into crimson, and then receded with a momentary shudder; a hasty exclamation escaped her; but pressing his hand immediately afterwards, and apologizing for this want of self-command, she bade him go on.

Rupert had received such severe rebukes from Esther, on the feelings he expressed for his little brother, that fearing they were indeed wrong, he qualified the involuntary tenderness of his expressions when speaking now of that unoffending innocent, by apologies for his foolish partiality to children in general.

"Never try to change your nature, or to disguise it, my Rupert!" said his mother, weeping with a mother's best

feelings, " for if you do, I can no longer let you see, that I cease not to love your father, and take an interest in all that affects his happiness;" her voice sunk away in tears with the last words, and rising, she walked a while apart, at the lower end of the chamber, till she could command herself.

" And now, let me look on you well, my Rupert!" she asked cheerfully, stopping before him, and holding him off from her breast, while she fondly scanned him from head to foot: first pleasure and then sadness, accompanied the survey.

In his tall, but youthful figure, she saw the promise of one as perfect as his father's; even now, it was as graceful: but in vain she looked (and she wondered why she should wish to find it,) for a resemblance to that father's face. The under lip perhaps, a little fuller than the other, of a dark ruby colour, and naturally smiling, might remind her of

Roselheim; but all the rest of the face was her own. It was composed of a fair complexion, eyes rather like the dove's than the eagle's, and a profusion of light brown hair waving almost into curls over a forehead of peculiar conformation.

A pupil of Lavater's, who had seen in the rest of this face, only signs of the amiable qualities; looking at that forehead, would have read there, powers of mind to attain the loftiest ones. It was indicative at once of genius and perseverance. What painters call the air of the head, was particularly noble in Rupert; and though his features did not reach either to the sublimity or beauty of the Apollo, they formed the contour of a Grecian youth.

As Madame Roselheim continued looking at him, the increasing smile which gradually mounted from his lips to his eyes, and the playful tone in which he said, "Well, my mother, I hope you find me with my proper complement of

limbs," proved that he inherited the gay humour of his father; and a sigh full of other days stole from her breast. Rupert took tender notice of this sigh; and, Madame Roselheim recovering herself, resumed their happier subjects of discourse. It was not for a mother, full of gratitude to Heaven for the unexpected happiness of seeing a long absent son, and thrilling with joy to find him apparently all she wished, and durst not hope; it was not for her, to dash one drop of bitter, into this draught of rare felicity. What was to become of Rupert; whether they were, or were not to part again; in short, what was to follow the sacred transports of this evening, she would not inquire: and when Colonel Roselheim joined them, she gently diverted aside his hasty questions on the subject, turning the conversation with soft address, first to her obligations to his affection, and then to his exploits as a soldier.

the latter was a theme always welcome to the brave Melchior.

As Rupert sat contemplating her while they were at supper, he remarked, that her attentions were more assiduous towards his uncle than to himself; and that observation helped him to a better knowledge of both. It seemed to indicate, that Colonel Roselheim was somewhat jealous of notice, and that Madame tenderly indulgent to the infirmity of one otherwise estimable, would rather restrain her own feelings than pain his.

Every moment, indeed, increased Rupert's admiration of this suffering mother, and his wonder that she could ever have been deserted by the husband of her youth.

So gentle, yet so dignified; with such feminine softness in all her looks and words, yet evidently with man's penetration and judgment, to guide the wills of others! So beautiful, too! Even now, he thought her the lovliest of her sex. And

if there be any equivalent for the etherial lightness, and bloom of youth, it was surely to be sought in Madame Roselheim's features and figure: the fine lines of both were unimpaired: but the colouring and expressions of the former, were subdued into one soft shade of patient sadness; and the elastic elegance of the other, was changed into a tranquil gracefulness, which harmonized better with a matron form.

When Rupert met her touching eyes, all full of the mother, or saw them averted, and suffused with tearful remembrance of her husband, he recollected to shuddering, the very different woman by whom she had been supplanted.

Any thing but the chaste love of a wife, was expressed by the strange gaze of the Countess Rhingravestien's dark eye; any thing but the tenderness of a mother, by her avowal of a mother's exultation. Rupert no longer wondered that his father not unfrequently turned

from her caress, or her unbridled admiration, with something like weariness.

But of that father, what was he to think in future, what was he to feel? that father, whose countenance had always seemed to him the perfect mirror of kindness and amiableness; whose character had been held up to him by his instructors, as the model for Christian patriots, as the champion of the true faith and right government; that father, so beloved by all who lived under him, whether in camp or city; the charm of every society into which he went; the friend of every distressed applicant; was he now to look upon him as a villain and a hypocrite; and was he never to see him more?

As Rupert sunk into a deep reverie, he asked himself these questions. He forgot the presence of the very mother whose injuries occasioned them; and pierced all at once to the heart, suddenly burst into tears.

He rose in confusion at his uncle's exclamation of "Why, what the plague!" and hurrying out of the room, tried to recover himself in a lobby. There, the gentle pressure of his mother's arms, and her voice soothing his emotion without questioning its cause, soon came to his aid. Her forbearing sweetness awakened at once his gratitude and his love; and kissing her hand repeatedly, as soon as he could find voice he besought her to pardon his folly, owning that the image of his father had crossed him, and caused a pang which he was sure she would understand.

"I divined it, my son!" whispered Madame Roselheim, straining him to her afflicted, yet gratified bosom, with even greater fervour than she had yet done. "Come, suppose I show you to your chamber for the night. Your feelings want repose, if your eyes do not." She added, smiling persuasively, as Rupert would have protested against being fa-

tigued, " We shall both be the better of some hours alone. And to-morrow we shall meet, I trust in God, reconciled to the evil part of our lot, and grateful, most grateful for the good. O, my Rupert, hitherto, for ten long years I have but endured life; henceforth I shall enjoy it."

" My mother!" was all Rupert could utter, as with a full heart he kissed away the tears, which crowding her eyes, tempered the smile, that might be said almost to beam upon her lips. Both, at that instant, thought of the same object. Their silence, after this, was not broken until they entered the chamber which Madame Roselheim, with a mother's care, gave up to her son.

She removed, with amiable address, the few articles of female attire which lay in sight, unobserved by her son; and thus securing to him the comfort of a well-aired and properly-appointed chamber, she blessed and embraced him, exhorted him to try to sleep, and looking

back at him once more with a smile and a benediction, closed the door, and departed.

Fain would Madame Roselheim have retired to some lonely spot to weep out her many feelings, to thank God for her present happiness, and implore him to soften that keen recollection of happiness past, which was bleeding afresh in her heart; but the claims of others were sacred with her: and anxious not to appear for a moment unmindful of Colonel Roselheim's feelings, she hastened to where she had left him.

A few words explained the motives of her stay, and showed the reasonableness of leaving Rupert to himself. After this, she gave way to her brother-in-law's peculiarities with submissive sweetness; allowing him to enter at once upon a discussion, which her fatigued spirits would fain have postponed. This subject was the important one of Rupert's future destination.

"You know, sister, he must be something," said the blunt soldier. "To begin with, we must make him a Protestant; else, nothing can be done."

"A little time will make him that, I trust," said Madame Roselheim, mildly. "When he has learned to love the exemplary professors of our faith, he will soon be taught to love that faith itself. Do you not think that an appearance of authority is apt to indispose young minds, even against their greatest good? and if the conscience is very tender, I should fancy it as apt to take alarm at gentler means, when evidently meant to influence them to the same end.

"I am sure, dear brother, you are the last person who would wish my Rupert influenced, in such a matter, by motives of interest, or by weakness."

The question, so put, Melchior was not prepared to deny: and an opinion so modestly given, as if the proposer of it waited for the sanction of him to whom it was

addressed, flattered the infirmity of his temper too much not to be acquiesced in.

But though disconcerted by his sister-in-law's address, he was not convinced, and he muttered something which implied that a boy of sixteen could know nothing of what was right or wrong in abstruse creeds; that it was for his abler kindred to choose for him; and that unless they did so, Rupert might either beg his bread, or return to his original destination of the priesthood.

Madame partly agreed to the latter proposition: then added a hope, that if Rupert, at the age of manhood, should unhappily remain attached to the doctrines of Rome, he might find a provision for himself, either in one of the learned professions, or in the army of France.

"That country," she said, "was Catholic; yet being now in actual alliance with the Protestant powers for the recovery of their religious and civil liberties, was likely to give countenance to any of

that party, who chose to seek a peaceful subsistence amongst them. Should Rupert, however, be led to re-consider the creed of his childhood while living amongst persons professing different opinions, and should he finally adopt their principles, she would have little left to desire; as in that case, she hoped he might embrace the sacred profession, for which even his education among monks would fit him especially; or perhaps he might bend his mind to commerce.

"If," she said, "her brother should ask her, what she wished on the subject of her son, she would frankly say, permission to take him back with her to Mariendorpt, for the example and instructions of her reverend friend there, whose conversation on the one important subject, she thought more likely to influence him than the arguments of a camp; but if Melchior thought otherwise, she prayed him to believe her ready to hear his better arguments."

Melchior did think otherwise; but there was no resisting a creature who took her right, as she would have received alms: and after several faint attempts to rally his courage, and maintain his own belief of what was most judicious, he fairly gave up the point.

It was therefore settled, that as Colonel Roselheim, being now restored to health, meant to resign his post in Ebrenfels, and resume his duties in the field, Rupert should accompany his mother back to Holland, and there be delivered over to the experienced and pious counsels of Muhldenau.

But even at Mariendorpt, Rupert must have the means of life, to prevent his becoming burthensome to the good minister; and the moment Madame Roselheim adverted to that, her rough brother-in-law softened his manner; spoke of a handsome compensation which he expected in lieu of a prisoner whom his superiors found it policy to retain in du-

rance ; and finally ended, by expressions of such unaffected indifference about his own use of money, and such affectionate remembrance of Madame Roselheim's early munificence to him, as well as of her just claim on the brother of her husband, that she forgot in the virtues, all the defects of his painfully-mixed character. Pecuniary obligations for this dear son, even from so near a kinsman and so generous a friend, was the bitterest consequence of that son's noble yet rash step. As she accepted it, the iron seemed to enter into Madame Roselheim's soul, and a higher colour started into her cheek : but she blamed this emotion as unworthy ; though its real source was not pride, but the apprehension of straitening her brother-in-law's means, too much for his own comfort. These important subjects thus fully discussed, they parted for the night ; and Madame Roselheim hastened to a small apartment which the atten-

tive Esther had already prepared for her.

This was her first sight of that attached and adventurous servant, since she knew all her obligations to her. At such a moment the distinctions of society were lost in the sacred sentiment of gratitude; and Madame Roselheim at once threw herself upon Esther's neck, acknowledging her obligation, and proclaiming her happiness.

This gracious embrace, though it more than rewarded her, overwhelmed Esther with confusion; and disclaiming all merit, she besought pardon for the presumption of her late conduct. Many affecting expressions from her lady followed this humility; after which Esther retired: and Madame Roselheim then gave up her whole soul to Heaven and happy thoughts.

To be awakened the next morning by the sound of a mother's voice, and the touch of a mother's lip, was a de-

light hitherto unknown to Rupert. Sacred and sweet was the emotion with which she bent over his opening eyelids, and he half rose from his pillow, to meet the maternal embrace! After a few moments of delightful agitation, Madame Roselheim at length calmed her spirits, and sat down by him, to repeat part of her conversation with his uncle, and to make him acquainted with that uncle's goodness.

There is no subject upon which Youth has such vague ideas, as that of money; none upon which it thinks so little. Rupert therefore was as much astonished to hear the details of his uncle's bounty, as though he had never before been told that his mother was not only deprived of her right to share his father's fortune, but bereaved of her own, by its confiscation to the Imperial crown. Madame Roselheim would have spared her son that pain, and the humiliation of knowing her poverty for awhile, but

that she deemed it due to Melchior to engage for him the affection of his nephew: she therefore calculated his small income, and showed that he must long have dedicated the chief part to her. Even that sum seemed inadequate to the respectable subsistence of herself and her servant; and Rupert, once awakened to such calculations, anxiously questioned her on the subject.

"His mother then told him with a playful air, that Esther served her for love; and that she herself had ingenious fingers, which enabled her to execute fine works and toys, by the sale of which, at the great fairs, through a neighbour who resorted thither, she gained sufficient, not merely to eke out her brother-in-law's allowance, but to administer something to the helpless poor. A deep colour flushed the young Rupert's face at this, and he looked down without speaking. His mother forgave the momentary pang, which she

had foreseen; and forebore to notice it. She proceeded gently to enquire whether he approved her plan, of having him with her at Mariendorpt, until he should have had time and opportunity of determining upon his future destination?

Rupert was silent a very long time, after she ceased speaking; as if deeply revolving all she had suggested. At length raising his head, he said with more seriousness than was usual to him, "You have said nothing about my being a Catholic, dearest mother. I feel that that will be a great obstacle to my preferment, and a great grief to you; but how could I be otherwise? and now that I am one, I hope neither you nor my uncle will wish me to change my religion, merely to get on in the world? I should hate myself if I could be persuaded to this, even by my mother. But my mother would only attempt it because she believed her opinions the right ones; and perhaps I might be weak enough

to yield, when so urged: I would do so much to make you happy, dearest mother!" and as Rupert spoke, with smiling yet tearful eyes, he put his arm round her neck.

His mother, drowned in tears of tenderness and affliction, could not answer. Rupert besought her to promise that she would leave his conscience unmolested, and never argue the awful question with him, until he was of ripe age; unless he felt doubts, and asked to have them resolved.

Madame Roselheim, sighingly, gave him the promise he asked; sustained by the hope of Muhldenau's eventual power over his respectable scruples. "Now then, dearest mother," he exclaimed cheerfully, "trust me for bestirring the few talents Providence may have given me, to make you and myself independent, and to repay my uncle. What those talents are, and how they are to be employed, I am not very clear just yet; but this I am certain, that Providence

always blesses right intentions; and that is sufficient for me to know."

Madame Roselheim could have said, that the same wise Providence often sees fit to try his most faithful servants by the disappointment of their best purposes: but this pious error of innocence and inexperience she held too sacred to be heedlessly removed; and replying only by an eloquent pressure of the hand, she left her son to rise.

In the short period which intervened between this day and that of his departure for Holland, Rupert saw more to love in his mother, and more to esteem in his uncle; and in some private conversation with the latter, in which he disclosed more fully than he would do to his mother, his earnest desire of not wasting even earliest youth in idleness, he lent a willing ear to Melchior's proposal of looking out for some post about the Commander-in-chief, where his complete command of languages, of the pen and the

pencil, might recommend him to further favour; and where he might have ample means of seeing a soldier's life, and estimating his degree of courage for braving its dangers.

At this implied doubt, all the best part of his father, sparkled in Rupert's eyes; but he only smiled. The expression of that smile was lost upon his uncle, who did not quite understand this calm indication of conscious intrepidity; and repeating, that he should be sorry if his nephew had not spirit enough for a soldier, he went on to anathematise the pitiful employments, and inglorious objects, of a merchant. Speaking of commerce with the prejudices of a man nobly born, and ill-instructed, he endeavoured to make its pursuits contemptible in the eyes of a boy naturally inclined to despise an occupation which had wealth alone for its ostensible aim: and to bitter sarcasms, he added more substantial reasons against the adoption of such a mode

of life by his nephew; grounded too truly, upon the time and money necessary to be expended, ere any profitable returns could be made.

Rupert quickly allayed his fears, by assuring him that his inclination pointed to the profession of arms; and that he only asked time for reflection, and for discussing the matter with such experienced directors as his mother and himself and the reverend friend to whom they were going, ere he could resolve the important question, whether as a Catholic he could enter into the service of the Protestant union.

Melchior simply observed, that the French monarch, with whose army the troops he served in, were now incorporated, was one of that union: he had not ability to press that argument further. He left it for another, at a later period, to settle the point at once, by asking Rupert, whether as a Catholic he thought it christian to persecute with fire and

sword the professors of another church? Whether he thought such difference of creeds justified the Emperor in breaking the solemn engagements ratified by his predecessors? And whether he would not consider himself bound by the laws of God and humanity, to run to the succour of any individual Protestant whom he saw in extremity?

If the latter, then surely it must be equally a moral duty to assist them when oppressed as a body; and if the former also, then his conscience could not blame him for entering into the ranks of men who were only seeking the redress of notorious grievances, and asking for their civil as well as religious rights.

On the day of separating for their different destinations, an affectionate parting took place between Madame Roselheim and her brother-in-law, who shook hands with Esther as well as with his nephew, when he saw them into the boat in which they were to descend the

Rhine: he called the latter "a clever wench;" and bidding the other look a little into engineering and fortification while idling in Holland, slipped some gold into his hand, and hurried away.

CHAP. V.

The voyage of the Rhine from Ehrenfels, to Wyk le Duerstede, was one of a few days: passing into the larger branch of the stream which thence flows to the left, their boat entered the great canal; whence it issued into the smaller one of Mariendorpt.

Even now, the hearts both of mother and son were not sufficiently tranquillised to enjoy the full happiness of being together; but much Madame Roselheim did enjoy.

Amidst the varied scenery which the shores of the majestic Rhine present to the eye; amidst the historical recollections, connected with the country where

it arises, and that through which it flows, a mother's feelings were delighted by the taste and enthusiasm which these recollections developed in her son: and when removed from the observation of such splendid objects, she talked with him singly in their small cabin, upon his past life and former companions, if she were not astonished by premature discretion, and soundness of judgment, she was touched by the loveliness of his heart; by that guileless credence of excellence; that unwillingness to find defects, and amiable anxiety to palliate them when found, which are the natural blossoms of youth, and which promise precious fruits in maturity.

She saw, too, with rational confidence of his future superiority, that he sincerely loved knowledge, and delighted in the exercise and improvement of his native talents. She discovered that he was far advanced in the mathematics; master of the dead and living languages;

well acquainted with ancient and modern history; that he wrote well, and drew finely.

She learnt too, that his father had given him frequent opportunities of acquiring the habits of general society: having several times carried him to Vienna and Munich; and not only shown him the note-worthy objects there, but taken him into select private companies.

Thus Rhinegravestein had kept up his son's affection, while cultivating his taste and manners; and had done so, without bringing him into the view of his Countess, whom Rupert never saw until after the birth of the little Julian.

From his description of her rival's reception of him, and his father's restrained, or really-changed feelings, Madame Roselheim ventured to ascribe this sudden graciousness solely to disgraceful motives. The Countess might long to manifest her own complete triumph over this feeble remnant of her prede-

cessor's power; to ascertain its extent; and to make the poor youth sensible that he had now no prospect of benefiting by his father's partiality. She judged her justly.

By tacit consent, both mother and son forbore for the present, to discuss the great and painful question of Rhingravestien's degree of guilt: yet the one yearned to ask whether he seemed happy; (how could she wish him to be so!) and the other longed to enquire whether a peculiar submissiveness to harsh spiritual direction, might not have been the sole cause of his father's fatal dereliction from right.

Esther had ascribed without scruple, Rhingravestein's repudiation of his wife, to inconstancy, vanity, and ambition united; and as such, had spared no terms of reprobation in speaking of it: but the feelings of a son, made Rupert cling to the belief that his father must have been wrought upon by some gloomy

bigot to believe himself obliged to divorce his Protestant wife. "Yet surely," he said, inwardly, "no duty called upon him to marry another?" Rupert sighed, and shrunk from further enquiry.

He was however, at that age, when emotions are happily as transient as they are acute: so that if at one moment he sighed, the next he smiled; and yielding to the natural playfulness of a happy temper, forgot himself, and nearly banished from the thoughts of his mother, all apprehension for the future.

The first sight of Mariendorpt, where that beloved mother had so long found refuge, checked his cheerfulness. When they came in view of its white flying bridge, and Esther pronounced its name, he looked earnestly towards it, and tears instantly appeared upon his checks.

Many were the ideas that filled his mind. The contrast of the proud and princely residence he had so lately quitted, with those rows of plain and formal

houses; the magnificent scenery of the one, the dull and monotous view of the other; the equipages, guards, vassals surrounding his father; and the poor passage-boat, from which he was now conducting his mother unobserved and unattended!

Perhaps, of all human creatures, Rupert was the least constituted to feel only the painful part of any subject; but he sufficiently resembled the generality of his kind, to be struck with it at first. The next moment, however, his heart swelled with the pleasurable emotion of gratitude towards the pious man who had afforded his deserted mother a secure though humble shelter from the storms of life. Silent and agitated, he rather followed, than led Madame Roselheim up the garden of the good Muhldenau; the trecht-schuyt having landed them on some steps which descended from it to the water's edge. Well acquainted with the habits of her friends, instead of going

round to the regular entrance, Madame Roselheim lifted the latch of a sashed door, opening into a passage near the parlour, where she expected to find Muhldenau and Meeta; and proceeding there, entered it unannounced.

The good minister was alone. A Greek Testament and some scattered papers of a MS. sermon were on a table beside him, but he was evidently resigned to a train of thought; for the closing day prevented the pursuance of his book or pen, and he was leaning back in his seat, with a look of melancholy abstraction.

There was still light enough to show distinctly, his pale and interesting countenance, and the neat arrangement of the apartment. Rupert felt the pleasing impression of both. His mother, dissolving in tears of joy, led him forward, and naming her son, put his hand into that of Muhldenau.

The venerable man rose in great emo-

tion, (for the sensibility of his youth often showed itself even now, in spite of long discipline and subjection,) his cheeks flushed brightly, and while he extended his arms to Rupert, and pressed him within them, several hasty and agitated exclamations demanded an explanation of this unexpected meeting.

Madame Roselheim's usual self-possession had deserted her at this affecting moment: with redoubling tears, she threw herself into a chair, unable to reply: and quite overcome with the extreme joy of thus bringing her son to this tried friend; with the awful hopes and wishes for that son's eternal welfare which such a meeting seemed to warrant; and with unavailing yearning after a husband once loved and yet too dear; she looked around for Meeta, that she might hide her weakness on her young bosom.

But Meeta was not there; and gracefully ashamed of her excessive emotion, Ma-

dame Roselheim faltered out a few words, to explain temporary absence, and hastened from the apartment.

The presence of Esther in her chamber, did not check the tide of so many powerful feelings.

Esther, by long service, and her late romantic enterprize, had acquired a sort of right to participation with her lady's griefs and joys: but with the instinctive delicacy of a good heart, she would have withdrawn the moment she saw her lady entering in such unusual disorder; but Madame Roselheim motioning her to stay, said in her most touching voice, "Is it not to you, my kind Esther, that I owe all this happiness?"

Esther for the first time in her life seized her lady's extended hand, and kissed it eagerly; then shocked at her own presumption, coloured deeply, and stammering out an apology, retreated into her own little chamber.

This moment had been devoted to

calm agitation, not to increase it; and her lady suffered her therefore to retire; giving her a speaking smile, to swell Esther's mental hoards of gratifying recollections, for days to come.

A short indulgence of her tears, and then a longer effort to replace them by calmness of look and manner, finally restored Madame Roselheim to the parlour.

She found there, that Rupert had made use of her absence, to inform Muhldenau of the extraordinary circumstance which acquainted him with his mother's history; and had told him also, the principal events which followed that knowledge.

Muhldenau bestowed a warm commendation upon the perilous daring of Esther; and calling it a signal dispensation of Providence, fervently hoped that God would grant his entire blessing to the act, by making it the foundation-stone of Rupert's future worth and prosperity.

Madame Roselheim now enquired for Meeta. Her father answered, that she was just gone to attend the sick room of a dear friend at Leyden, where her presence was a comfort and an assistance to the poor invalid's widowed mother; and that he had consented to spare her, therefore, as long as her cares should be required.

Madame Roselheim's gentle but repeated expressions of regret at Meeta's absence were mixed with a strong sentiment of satisfaction at her performing so soon, and so willingly, one of life's melancholy, yet salutary duties. She then enquired after their immediate neighbours, with as much interest as though they were all the members of one large and loving family: she did not forget either the servants or the household animals.

Muhldenau's cat, and Meeta's stork, were particularly mentioned; and Rupert, with a hovering smile, heard the good

minister seriously congratulate himself upon the continued possession of the one, while regretting the customary departure of the other.

Muhldenau, who caught the smile, observed it kindly; adding, "Meeta and I will have our revenge for this, some day, depend upon it, my young friend! — when thou hast lived long enough in our calm way, to think innocent trifles of consequence; and to find that even dumb creatures can wind round the heart, when they form parts of home; — we shall see thee caressing something more uncouth than our favourites."

"I shall be more likely to make atonement here," replied Rupert, colouring ingenuously, and stooping to caress the fine tabby cat, which at that moment appeared from under her master's chair. "I feel already, that I am fated to love every table and chair in the house, which has been my dearest mother's home, so long."

Muhldenau concealed the sudden emotion which this grateful expression caused, under a playfulness which was always sufficiently tempered, to become his years. "Thy heart must be far better than thy taste, then," he said, glancing over the stiff strait lines of all the furniture; "but the courtship will be very honourable to thee."

Encouraged by his cheerfulness, and peculiarly captivated by Muhldenau's primitive and endearing habit of substituting *thee* and *thou* for the more modish pronouns, Rupert's soul expanded into complete confidence: he talked with the free ardour of delighted youth; giving alternate way to grave and gay thoughts as they arose; and displaying thus the discordance of his circumstances with his character: the latter of such an affecting nature, the former so tuned to happiness and philanthropy.

His mother and her pious friend observed him with obvious pleasure, and

secret interest: they noted the growing charm of his countenance; they saw that he neither watched his companions nor himself, but with that felicitous carelessness of manner which is as graceful as it is indicative of inward truth, showed every feeling as it came. Each, remarked his devoted attentions to the other: Madame Roselheim, more tenderly affected by her son's evident gratitude to Muhldenau for her sake, than by that son's lavish fondness to herself; and Muhldenau well-pleased to ascertain filial affection, where a want of it had so long been feared.

Properly anxious to avoid more agitating topics until a fitter season, the good minister drew a pleasing picture of Dutch habits and society; touching it here and there with a few strokes of harmless humour, to recommend it to his young friend's notice, and to assure him that his own sportings with the same subject,

if untinctured by satire, would be received with indulgent smiles.

In return, he encouraged Rupert to describe the customs and characters in the cloister at Saltzburgh, and other societies: he induced him to give descriptions of such works of art, and natural objects as he had seen in Vienna or elsewhere; and by this means he discovered, in some degree, the extent of his capacity for observation.

While listening to these narrations, Muhldenau was pleased with the youth's vivacity and clearness of perception; with the leniency of his judgment upon moral conduct; coupled with that quick sense of the ridiculous in all that related to manners and habits, which gave his conversation a zest without any bitterness.

Rupert's wit, indeed, was bright and hurtless as that beautiful species of lightning which plays through summer skies,

lighting them up, only to show that they are without a cloud.

His tender mother took but small share in these discourses : her heart was in her ear and in her eye. She was reading this dear son, with both ; and so eloquently did her feelings speak in her varying countenance, while listening to, and looking at him, that Rupert remained unconscious of her silence.

But oh! how busy was her heart the while! how thronged was it with all the images of her own youth, and of that of Rhingravestein! how many thrilling recollections, did some vanishing expression of Rupert's face, bring into her mind!

After a blessed trance of ten long years, they seemed to awake her once more to her youth and early love. But ashamed of feeling this vain glow even of a sacred affection, she tried to disperse the gathering tears from her eyes, by steadily repeating to herself, that her

youth was gone; that such tenderness as this, was not for a matron breast to feel; and that if she had been banished by the husband of her morning years, before a juster, yet more profound sentiment had grown over the idolatrous enthusiam of first love, she was called upon to banish the romantic weakness of the latter, and to forget the culpable father, in the excellent son.

Rousing herself, therefore, she plunged at once into the conversation; till at length her perturbed spirits subsided into something like their usual tranquility. A little tremulousness remained upon the surface, perhaps, but it was chiefly the tremor of continually reflowing gratitude; and as such, it took nothing away from her own enjoyment, nor from that of her companions. Entirely occupied by interesting objects, the little domestic details had gone on in their usual routine, mechanically performed or witnessed by all the party, so that the

clock struck ten, and Jemima was entering, with a face as solemn as the clock itself, or as the cover of the book she carried, ere any of them recollected it was their hour of evening prayer.

Instant and painful embarrassment took possession of all but Rupert, who unconscious of the cause, looked from his mother to the servants, as if enquiring the reason of their appearance. Muhldenau calmly named the holy duty they were about to join in ; kindly adding, that ere they began, if his young guest wished it, he would show him to his chamber.

Pale and confounded, Rupert stood for a moment, not irresolute as to his conduct, but grieving for the pain he was about to occasion. There was something striking and affecting in the firm, yet gentle voice, with which, turning his beseeching eyes upon Madame Roselheim, he said, "You must pardon me, my mother ! I am very, very sorry ; but —" and,

unable to say more, he retreated hastily.

His mother turned away, to conceal her gushing tears from the servants. Esther stood looking after him, with a strange mixture of horror at his religion, of respect for his conscientious obedience to its ordinances, and of resentment at him for her lady's sake. Her dark complexion was coloured by a variety of distressed and wrathful feelings.

But Jemima stood with the same imperturbable countenance and jointless figure, as though cut out by the gardener from one of the yew trees ; and Christy, with her round wash-ball-like face, only fell a step or two back from her customary kneeling place.

In a few minutes Muhldenau returned; and though his pensive countenance had a sadder shade, he directed an encouraging smile towards Madame Roselheim, as she knelt down. The prayer he se-

lected, was singularly appropriate to the occasion; and as it enabled him to implore light and conviction for the absent Rupert, it caused the mother's tears to flow with healing power.

Madame Roselheim, indeed, could no longer command her long-suppressed, and much agitated feelings; so that when they all rose from their knees, she could only kiss Muhldenau's hand, and by an expressive action indicate her incapacity of supporting any further conversation for that night. Her friend understood the action, and yielded to it.

Early the next day, Muhldenau received his new guest, by appointment, in his little study.

His mother's obligations to the venerable man, had left Rupert nothing to learn of his virtues; but he required a personal knowledge of him, ere he could be convinced, that a belief in those virtues must unlock his heart: it had

not been the case with regard to his uncle.

Rupert, indeed, had spoken freely to Colonel Roselheim of his future fate, so far as it might depend upon his own exertion and resolution; but from the discussion of any nice point of feeling and of duty, he shrunk involuntarily: he felt, beforehand, that his uncle would handle them roughly; and though on all such, Rupert, from his monastic habits and ductile temper, was ready to be guided even into a line of conduct which his gentleness would fain shun, he required tenderness in the mode of so guiding him.

Attracted by the benign and almost pitying countenance of the minister of Mariendorpt, he felt that all his feelings would be compassionated, all his erring judgments mildly reclaimed: he had therefore petitioned, the night before, for this private interview; and he came

to it with the resolution of laying open his whole soul.

The first subject upon which Rupert besought instruction, was that of his father. He described with a softened voice the unvaried kindness of that father; the frequent tears he had seen clouding his eyes while regarding him, and for which till now, Rupert knew not how to account: he dwelt upon the probable influence of some spiritual director over Rhinegravestein's conscience; and he entreated Muhldenau to say, whether all these things ought to be forgotten, in one dreadful act?

"Do not mistake me, dear Sir," he added hastily, seeing Muhldenau's face look sadder than usual, "I never wish to behold my father again, — much as I — have loved him! for I feel I could ill support such a meeting, (his lips quivered as he spoke); but I think, I am sure, he must be greatly distressed by my strange disappearance; and I would

willingly relieve his mind from any fears for my safety. It is not a son's duty, I hope, to punish his parent. It would be both merciful and right, surely, to tell him where I am, and why I have left him for ever?"

"This feeling does thee honour, my young friend!" replied Muhldenau, looking kindly upon the tearful and disordered countenance of his modest companion: "I see thou hast thy mother's heart: may God give his blessing to it; and ripen these, these rare seeds of truly Christian virtues!"

Rupert encouraged by this approbation, proceeded to disclose his wishes further; and Muhldenau sanctioning them, it was agreed, that he should write to the Count Rhinegravestein as his feelings dictated; reproving him not by words, but by the simple act of separating from him for ever.

This subject discussed, Rupert went on to others: those of his future career,

his mother's wants, and the religion in which he had been educated.

Upon all these topics, Muhldenau saw the same candour, the same moderation of temper, yet warmth of conviction; the same anxiety to find out and pursue the right, as the former had evinced in the business of his father.

Rupert confessed, that educated certainly in his earlier years for the world at large, he had felt, even after his destination was changed, an unconquerable predilection for the profession of arms. He owned that such a predilection might have been engrafted on him by the military fame and martial graces of his father, but it existed now; and he thought, that were he permitted to follow this inclination, he should make no inglorious figure.

The very age they lived in, he observed, was fruitful of great commanders, who had risen to the highest honours from the lowest conditions; and he

hoped, therefore, that Muhldenau would pardon him for being anxious to win that name and station for himself which had been ravished from him.

"When thou hast lived to my age, my young friend!" said the minister, mildly, "thou wilt discover that a man's true dignity does not consist in the extent of his sphere of action, nor in the acclaim of multitudes; but in the testimony of his own conscience, and the esteem of his surrounding circle, however small that may be. He is equally acceptable in the eye of Heaven, 'who is faithful over ten, as over fifty.' So whatever be thy future destination, do but thy duty in it, and I shall witness it with satisfaction."

A glow came into Rupert's face, as, admitting the truth of this, he besought Muhldenau to believe that he had omitted naming commerce, not from motives of pride, though he confest he had some to

overcome, but from reflection upon some arguments of his uncle's.

Colonel Roselheim had assured him that he must be several years learning the rules, and acquiring the habits of trade: that, at first, a premium would be required of him; and afterwards he would receive only a very small salary. And that, after all, in so poor and profitless a situation, he must expect to remain through life, unlesss some fortunate chance should procure him a share in an established firm, or he be enabled to purchase one, by throwing a large sum of money into the concern.

Either prospect was folly for him to anticipate; and he thought, therefore, that situated as he was, it was better for him to embrace some profession, for which his previous education might in a greater degree fit him, and in which he might, at least obtain a maintenance for himself.

The minister of Mariendorpt had little to oppose to these reasons against

trade; aware that neither he nor Madame Roselheim had funds to provide either now, or in future, proper provision for a young man about to undertake it: but he was gently earnest in trying to remove Rupert's prejudices against a body of men, to whom every corner of the earth is indebted for increased civilisation, and increased comforts; and from whom have emanated many of the wisest institutions, and the widest-reaching charities, which continue to bless mankind.

Rupert listened, and was convinced; blushed, and avowed his error.

On the subject of religion, Muhldenau spoke with more authority and greater length. His object was not to influence so young a person to any present change, but gently to lead him into reflections and studies, which would ensure, or at least promise, future conviction.

But upon this subject alone, Muhldenau observed a trembling apprehensiveness, which, though it spoke well for Rupert's

delicacy of conscience, would render the task of his conversion one of extreme difficulty.

"O Sir, forbear to urge this!" he said, quite pale with agitation. "I have so many motives to become a Protestant, that I should dread being secretly influenced by them, while I supposed myself yielding solely to conviction. The veneration, the gratitude I owe to you, — my love for my mother, — my great love, which I have no other way to prove — my desire to please my good uncle, — and then the certainty that there is no quick promotion for me in any army of the union, except that of France; — no, Sir, you must not urge me."

"I urge nothing, but the attentive study of this one book," replied Muhldenau, laying his hand on the open pages of a Bible by his side. "I respect this tenderness of conscience too much to violate it. I try no human reasonings: I ask

thee, my dear youth, only to read this volume, and compare its doctrines with those thou hast been taught: I warn thee only to beware confounding those doctrines with inculcated traditions, and long-established customs: I ask thee only to try our different creeds by the inward assent or disapproval of thine own heart, and equally to fear the subtle effect of dreading the world's censure, as that of yielding to its interested promises."

Rupert put aside the Bible he offered, with apprehensive quickness.

"Dost thou never read thy Bible?" asked Muhldenau, smiling, with a mixture of compassion aud reproof.

"Yes, Sir; oftener than some of the brotherhood at Saltzburg liked, who preferred my study of the Fathers; yet, not so often as I ought, perhaps. But I never read it with any intention to find it at variance with the religion I had been taught; and if I were to sit down to the reading of it, now, with such a thought, I think the

curse of Heaven must follow such impiety."

Muhldenau, more and more interested in this virtuous dread of guilt, much as it impeded his first efforts to instruct Rupert better, explained his meaning; and distinctly marked the difference between that frame of mind with which a man examines two opposite opinions with a sincere desire to learn which should be rejected, and which retained; and that with which he does so, inwardly resolved to find his favourite one correct.

He forbore, however, to press the subject further; replacing the sacred volume, while he said, "When thou hast lived with us awhile, my dear youth, and learned to consider our tenets with less horror, perpaps thou mayst wish to know them better than the fathers of St. Benedict would permit thee. Come, then, freely to me, assured that I can have nothing more at heart than the temporal

and spiritual welfare of Madame Roselheim's son. Meanwhile, thou and I will go on with our other studies, as we settled at first." And with this compact they parted.

CHAP. VI.

After this morning, Rupert lost no time in fulfilling his part in his own settlement and improvement.

A letter read and approved, with many tears, by his mother, was dispatched by a circuitous mode to the count of Rhinegravestein, without date or address, as it was not Rupert's intention to invite an answer which must either afflict or displease him; and another to his uncle, stating his resolution of adhering to the way of life he had proposed, and his intention of immediately studying whatever might tend to distinguish him by more than bodily courage, when he should become a soldier. He then gave

himself with cheerful perseverance, to these various employments.

The mornings and afternoons he devoted to the continuance of old studies, and the prosecution of new ones; the most important, frequently under the inspection of Muhldenau: the minor ones, alone, and with that alternation of confidence and despondency, of experiment and failure, which, rendering what we teach ourselves, a greater difficulty, makes the conquest of it a greater joy.

His evenings were given to the social parlour of the good minister, where occasionally, a few respectable neighbours assembled to share Madame's coffee, and tell the news of the province.

Many of the rich families in Utrecht had their country-houses on the borders of the canal of Mariendorpt; and either in their pleasure-boats during summer, or in their furred sledges during winter, often came to visit the venerable Muhldenau.

Rupert was amused with the exact conformity of the Dutch people, with the appearance of their houses and their landscapes; every thing, indeed, to his laughing eye, seemed economically cut out by the same pattern. The round box-trees, and the plump wives of the burgomasters; the smooth-surfaced canals, and the unvarying smiles of their good-tempered daughters; their formal waiting-maids, like the strait-backed chairs in their kitchens; their humours always as cheerful as their evergreens, but never brighter at one season than another: in truth, a complete absence of the picturesque, in themselves, as in their country; and the picturesque was a quality, which Rupert from his infancy had been accustomed to feel and enjoy, ere he could analyze its charm.

The stupendous scenery around Saltzbourg; the romantic gardens of the monastery itself; the infinite variety of character and countenance, which he observed amongst the students of its col-

lege : even the mysterious worship of his church, with its robed priests, fuming incense and thrilling music ; all these were sublime, or beautiful, or wild : they were any thing, in short, but tame.

Yet the persons, and the places, which seemed by contrast with these others, almost featureless, possessed charms of their own ; and a world-wearied spirit would have found them out. These charms consisted in the repose they gave to hearts exhausted with strong emotions, glad to taste tranquil happiness on the lap of worth and kindness, and to find beauty, in prospects which proclaimed comfort and plenty.

But Rupert was not arrived at the age in which mere taste, is subordinate to higher sources of enjoyment ; he therefore often lifted up his hands and eyes with amazement, at the perversion of natural forms which he saw in Holland : and while he listened to the harmless chat of the young women about their parrots and

their knitting; or to the more occult talk of their mothers, concerning dairies, receipt-books, and household management; when he heard the men's voices proceeding like oracles of old, from thick clouds, as they sat smoking and calculating gains and losses; he was sometimes ready to burst forth in laughter, and at others could have wept, to think his mother was doomed to pass her life in such humble society. But whenever he felt any tedium in the company of their dullest neighbours, he had but to turn his attention to the intellectual countenances, and interesting conversation of his mother and her venerable friend, to feel that he, at least, was highly privileged.

There was a dignified simplicity in the habits of Muhldenau, united with the most courteous amenity of manners, which testified that retirement was his choice, not his destiny: it was evident that he had tasted all the sparkling and flavoured

draughts of life, and preferred, at last, the pure and wholesome spring. His affectionate condescension to the inferior experience and lesser cultivation of his flock, was ennobled by his frank expression of what he owed to them in the days of affliction and want; and of his high opinion of their moral value; so that Rupert at first regarded his conduct with respectful resistance of his own desire to entertain himself with their peculiarities; and at length became sincerely desirous of imitating it, by equal forbearance and good will.

Of the young Meeta he heard his mother speak often, and in such terms, that he felt already something like a brother's affection for her; but he wished for her return, principally to enjoy the companionship of a spirit as gay and as young as his own. He had no premature sentimentality to indulge; for his affections ran too strongly in their natural channels to seek out new ones.

Of Meeta's present return, however, there was little prospect. She was still watching and waiting upon her dying friend, whose disorder was now pronounced mortal, and from whom, therefore, no selfish considerations could tear her.

This early victim to decay, had been for several years in the custom of spending her summers with an uncle at Mariendorpt; and though five years older than Meeta, cherished for her so lively an attachment, that she no sooner knew herself declining, then she wished for her to cheer her in her last moments.

"Eustatia Vanderhoven's situation was as affecting as her character was sweet and good. She was engaged to her cousin, an exemplary young man, who had lately completed his studies and taken orders: and they were to have been married immediately upon his return from Stockholm, whither he was

gone to settle some business for an uncle.

This return was now an object of secret dread, yet desire, to the poor Eustatia; who felt too surely, that either her death-bed, or her grave, was all the welcome that awaited Aremberg.

To smooth the dying hours of an innocent sufferer, and lighten if possible, the affliction of her mother, Muhldenau unrepiningly yielded up his daughter, young as she was, to such solemn duties. And when he heard at last, that death had released Eustatia, he granted Meeta's agonised entreaty, that he would spare her yet longer, till the dangerous violence of Madame Vanderhoven's grief had subsided.

Meeta, when she urged this request, coupled it with many affectionate expressions of impatience to witness Madame Roselheim's joy in the son whom she longed to see; but confest, that she felt it right to curb that selfish longing, when

by doing so, she might be of comfort to a sorrowing friend.

" She is early called upon to practise what we taught her " observed Muhldenau, an expression of parental satisfaction stealing over his saddened aspect; " and I rejoice that she is able and willing to do so. How many of our virtues have their best soil in tears! — how tender and lasting are the affections which are thus cemented, by suffering on one side, and by sympathy and services on the other!"

Madame Roselheim was too well qualified to echo this sentiment; but Rupert could only ponder on it, and believe it true, upon their testimony.

He was himself soon after called upon to exercise similar sympathies; and to discover with shame at his past rash judgments, that a native of Holland, — the kinsman and associate of traders, — might be as richly gifted by nature, and as widely informed by educa-

tion, as the offspring of princes and heroes.

Aremberg, the betrothed husband of Eustatia, came to Mariendorpt. His uncle who was there also, and resided near the parsonage, was fortunately at Leyden, when the unhappy lover arrived but a few hours after her funeral.

Alarmed at the excess of his nephew's grief, Mr. Vanderhoven determined upon removing him as soon as possible; and he did so, at a time when the bereaved mourner was scarcely sensible to outward objects.

Removed from the scene of former hopes, and the contagion of her mother's anguish, this judicious relative saw the effect realized, which he had anticipated. Aremberg ventured not to refuse the society of the excellent Muhldenau: their sacred profession formed a bond between them; and afforded the latter, opportunities and arguments with which to combat excessive indulgence of sorrow. He

urged these arguments steadily, yet with the mournful tenderness of one who had himself drunk of the same bitter cup.

"Yours was actual happiness," observed Mr. Vanderhoven, who was present when Muhldenau first touched upon his own early trial of a similar sort, "Marritious's but the hope of such happiness."

Aremberg's reason admitted the difference: his heart at present did not feel that there was any.

He was, however, far from yielding to criminal distraction: and though he talked and looked as if the pleasures of life were anihilated to him for ever, he became but the more anxious to fulfil its duties.

In despite of that sickly loathing of occupation or amusement, which belongs to great griefs, he forced himself to take an interest in the views and exertions of Rupert; and having himself

been intended for the army, (a profession he renounced,) undertook to revive his former knowledge of certain subjects, for Rupert's sake. Muhldenau encouraged this benevolent exertion, assured that there is no balsam for sorrow like that afforded by the consciousness of trying to do good; and Madame Roselheim, grateful for the help it gave to her son, repaid him by every touching attention to his bleeding feelings.

By giving themselves principally to the task of comforting Aremberg, the family at the parsonage necessarily excluded most others: thus Rupert saw yet more of his mother; and without any settled intention on the part of Muhldenau, was made the auditor of many interesting discussions, upon the nature of their religious opinions, which at first shocked, then perplexed, afterwards troubled, and finally determined him to search further, whenever riper

years should enable him to do so, without presumption.

Till then, even the pious minister of Mariendorpt deemed vehement exhortations, blameable and useless. He joined with Madame Roselheim in abstaining from all argument or persuasion upon that important subject; contenting himself with commanding Rupert's respect for their conduct, and leaving him to be gradually enlightened upon their doctrines, by familiar conversations addressed to others.

The tolerant spirit of the Dutch government allowing the free exercise of every religion, Rupert early found a Catholic chapel, and a Catholic priest: but the latter happened to be a man of such limited intellect, that even a youth saw how inadequate a guide he must prove in doubtful ways; and the former was at such a distance, that he reached it at the cost of much time and fatigue. He would fain have found an abler confessor, though at a still greater

distance; but none were within his reach.

He contented himself, therefore, with strict attendance upon the worship of his church, and as rigid obedience to its law of fasts; and if Muhldenau and his grieving mother, could not agree with him upon the Divine command for these things, they failed not to admire his conscientious performance of them.

Among the many in Mariendorpt whose regard Rupert conciliated, was his first acquaintance and extreme favourite, Esther. He was amused by her extraordinary habits, as much as he was interested by her enthusiastic temper; and she in return was flattered by his partiality, and assisted by his ingenuity. Amongst several others which he used to cultivate at Saltzburg, Rupert had a mechanical talent: he loved gardening; and knew many serviceable secrets of chemistry, a science then considered magic, by the general class of society. He

was always ready to invent and execute little improvements in the common household machines; to nail up fruit-trees, dig flower beds, make composts, and remove stains, or give new colours to damaged furniture.

In all their domestic distresses, therefore, Esther had only to ask the assistance of Master Rupert, and to have him leave his severest studies, or sweetest recreations, with amiable alacrity: and as she assumed a large share in the business of Muhldenau's small establishment, Rupert's good humour, and capacity for doing every thing, was often put to the test.

Animated by gratitude, and assisted by her uncommon strength, Esther had long performed nearly all the functions of a gardener and a farming-man at the parsonage. In winter as in summer she was always up two hours earlier and later than any other person. She planted the vegetables, fed the poultry, stalled and

milked the cows, foddered the horse, and walked or skaited to distant markets with the saleable superfluities of their farm-yard and dairy.

Leaving the lighter tasks of culinary service, and the ignoble ones of scrubbing and scowring, to Christy; that of spinning and sewing, and attending upon her master, to grave Jemima; she cheerfully undertook every office that required strength, activity, and good sense: thus, she was always the person employed to buy and sell, and go upon matters of occasional business.

By such habits, Esther acquired a decided habit of dictation to every body within her sphere, her lady excepted; and she displayed this character, in her lofty mien.

Yet was there nothing masculine, either in her appearance or her conversation: she looked what she was, an extraordinary woman. One of such large proportions, and commanding features, as

Michael Angelo might have painted for the immediate offspring of Deucalion and Pyrrha. Handsome, as well as active, Esther had several suitors : but she scorned them all ; professing, what she felt, a hearty abhorrence of marriage, and a determination to spend a single life, in her lady's service.

Rupert once jested with her upon this resolution ; but he never did it again : for Esther had no management of terms when she spoke of his father ; and Rhinegravestein's conduct, was the root of all her arguments against marriage.

By degrees, however she grew to bridle her expressions upon this subject, and upon that of Romish idolatries, as she became more affectionately attached to Rupert. For though Rupert's youth, and gay temper, allowed him in more familiar kindness to Esther than would have been becoming in his mother, he still maintained, though unconsciously, that air of birth which Esther willingly

bowed to, when her heart consented to it.

This voluntary submission was strikingly evident in her attendance upon Madame Roselheim, who knew better than Rupert how to elevate Esther in the opinion of her equals, and yet preserve that due distance between mistress and servant, which is demanded by the wise regulations of society.

Esther herself, loved her lady too devotedly, not to feel a respect for her, which bordered upon awe; so that whatever were the new rights she acquired to affectionate confidence, she shunned receiving them. In proportion to the fall of her lady's fortunes, she was more and more scrupulous to testify reverence for her character; thus entitling herself to challenge equal respect from others, for the same object.

So successfully had Esther employed this engine, and so skilfully did she excite the wonder and curiosity, and awe of

those she conversed with, on this favourite subject, that the country people, far and near, regarded Madame Roselheim as a being of another order; one, before whose mysterious dignity and extraordinary qualities, the rank of queens, and the endowments of saints and sages, sunk into nothing.

The peasantry were in truth, well acquainted with Madame Roselheim's touching benevolences of word and deed; and when she appeared amongst them, the graceful difference of her attire from that of their own country ladies; the refined style of her yet striking beauty; and above all, the courteous dignity and tender condescension of her manners, made them feel that she was not born to be approached by such as them, with familiar love.

Excessive as this veneration might really be, it did not seem so to Rupert, who was never weary of admiring the soft loveliness of his mother's character.

With means so limited, her power of usefulness seemed blessed like the widow's cruse; small in appearance, but inexhaustible: in fact, she felt for all — she thought for all; and as such, she discovered ways of serving every body, which others dreamt not of.

Thus, on all occasions of family dissension, reverses of fortune, sorrow, sickness, trouble of any kind, the suffering heart constantly turned to Madame Roselheim; they flew to her as to some tutelary deity, feeling fancied security in her presence, and real comfort from her counsels or consolations.

Such benevolence fell back upon her own bosom with refreshing power. For thus occupied with others, she thought rarely of herself: her various occupations left her no time for brooding over past joys, while they provided her with new ones; so that years and afflictions, as they gradually threw a softer shade over her feelings, only dimmed, not defaced that

beauty which, even in youth, owed its greatest charm to an appearance of heavenly composure.

Rupert had been four months at Mariendorpt, when a letter from his uncle summoned him away.

It contained a long account of some ill-usage received from the French Marechal, concerning his right to the ransom of a prisoner; and stated that disgusted with this, he had applied to the new commander-in-chief of the Swedish army, Field-marshal Torstenson; and that he had kindly offered him (for the sake of old comradeship,) a regiment of Swedish foot.

Colonel Roselheim added, that he had accepted this; and was already enabled to secure a situation for his nephew, suited to his inexperienced years, and promising talents.

This was page to a general of cavalry, Count Cratzenstein, whose rank and fortune entitled him to such a seemingly-

useless appendage; but whose neglected education, putting him upon a par with yet abler officers who had risen from inferior conditions, made the acquisition of an amanuensis, absolutely indispensable to him.

Rupert's superiority with his pen, his acquaintance with languages, and talent for drawing, would, his uncle hoped, take the General's favour by surprise, and so open a door to him for military promotion hereafter.

To separate herself from a son so amiable and so beloved, was a severe trial to Madame Roselheim; but ever accustomed to crush selfish feelings, when they opposed the best interests of those she loved, and thankful for this opportunity of placing him in a situation not degrading, and comparatively free from danger, she disguised her own sorrow under a face of smiles, and courageously expedited the necessary preparations for his departure. If, as her hands busily

completed some needful article for his personal comfort, a sigh rose to her lips, she smothered it among expressions of cheering anticipation.

Thus Rupert could not discern the greatness of his mother's sacrifice, except by her looks of tenderer love, and by her anxiety to find out arguments for gratitude, rather than for regret. One of the principal of these, was grounded upon her just preference of the Swedish service to that of France. There were heroes in both, she knew; for the great Condé and the young Turenne were in that of France; and in that of Sweden, still remained the fragments of that splendid body of Christian warriors, who learnt at once war and virtue, under the Great Gustavus.

But she dreaded for her son, the decorated vices of the Parisian court, even in its camp; and she knew that the warriors of Stockholm maintained their se-

vere morality, though deprived of their first illustrious exemplar.

It was joyful also, to know that Rupert's was an employment of peace; that it was one in which he might be perfecting his natural talents, until he reached an age of capacity for higher things; and that then, perhaps, he might adopt some less dangerous and more profitable profession than that of arms.

Only one cause for solicitude remained: Rupert's solitary journey into Silesia, where the Swedish army was now breaking up its winter quarters. Even this uneasiness was removed.

Aremberg, acquainted with Madame Roselheim's feelings, unwilling to lose sight of his young friend so suddenly, and careless whither he went, offered to be his conductor to the camp. The offer, after short hesitation, was accepted.

Mr. Vanderhoven, when consulted, thought that such complete change of place and circumstances might divert

the mind of his nephew: and Muhldenau, with a juster view of a sensible soul, thought that the more opportunities were afforded to Aremberg of attaching himself to the object of a pure friendship, the greater would be the probability of his becoming resigned to the loss of a softer affection. He, therefore, cordially agreed with Aremberg, in pressing his company upon the young traveller.

No sooner was this happy arrangement made, than the family at Mariendorpt were as eager to get Rupert off before the return of Meeta, as they were formerly anxious to detain him. They wished to spare Aremberg the sight of one who had witnessed the last moments of Eustatia.

Grieved as Madame Roselheim was, to lose the pleasure of showing her son to the endearing girl, whom she loved with a mother's tenderness, she felt that it was barbarity not to provide against the evil of reviving Aremberg's first

agonies; and she therefore did not detain Rupert one moment after his equipments were finished.

Bitter was the pain of parting from him! Madame Roselheim took leave of her son alone: all that the fondest affection and the purest principles may be supposed to inspire of advice and exhortation, was said by this fondest of mothers. She called upon him by every sacred obligation, to persevere in the path of rectitude into which he had already entered; she besought him to justify his desertion of his father, by conduct which should prove that he was actuated solely by the noblest motives.

She would have said a few words upon the subject nearest her heart, but Muhldenau had conjured her to refrain, and trust to Aremberg's influence: she therefore only murmured, while straining him to her breast, "Go, my son, and return to me unaltered in every point but one! on that, may a gracious God enlighten

you: and so bless your anxious mother's daily and nightly prayers!"

Tears choked her utterance, while Rupert, returning her fond pressure, again and again, whispered with convulsive emotion, "O my mother, I would fain be all you wish me! I pray too, for myself — and I have a patient friend in Aremberg: he talks to me often on this subject. Be comforted! God will make me, or keep me, what he alone knows to be the best."

Madame Roselheim, all bathed in tears, printed another yet fonder kiss upon his closed and streaming eyelids; and Rupert smiling the farewell he could no longer utter, tore himself away.

CHAP. VII.

The events of the succeeding four years after the departure of Rupert from Mariendorpt, so far as they related to his private fortunes, contained little worthy of minute detail. They carried him gradually forward from youth to the first year of manhood; and visibly diminishing the gaiety of his character, deepened its tenderness, and ripened its nobler qualities.

During this period, he shared in the hurry and vicissitudes of successive campaigns made in Moravia and Silesia; but he took no other part in their dangers, than what unavoidably belonged to every individual attached to the army, however peaceful his office.

His situation under Count Cratzenstein was not laborious; but it afforded him few gratifications. He wrote and drew for the Count, kept his military journal, took maps, and measured distances; and when prisoners of rank were brought into camp, belonging to the Emperor's Italian or Spanish allies, Rupert was called upon to act as interpreter, and settle the terms of their ransoms.

Cratzenstein was one of the many distinguished officers of that time, who knew not how to read or write their own dispatches; and being perfectly illiterate, (though endowed with a strong military talent, and nobly born,) was little calculated to perceive the ease and perspicuity of Rupert's compositions in his name: consequently, he never bestowed upon him the reward of praise.

Cratzenstein, indeed, saw in the modest youth, who attentively heard his orders, and accurately obeyed them, only a useful machine, which performed

its appointed task, at the proper time; and unawakened to interest, by talents with which he had no sympathy (consequently had no standard to judge them by,) he continued to have familiar intercourse with him, every day, almost every hour, without once feeling any curiosity about his past fate, or any anxiety for his future fortune.

Rupert happily was not of a nature to care much for individual indifference. He was sure that the mass of mankind are always just in their judgments upon public conduct, and he hoped one day to deserve and obtain their suffrage. Contented with the consciousness of doing his duty to Count Cratzenstein, and amiably tolerant of what he termed men's different manners, he left his general's presence without a movement of mortification, and hastened to enjoy himself with the friend his own endearing qualities had attached to him.

This friend was Aremberg. At the

time he undertook to convey Rupert to the Swedish camp, all his ties in Holland were broken. Deprived of the amiable young creature with whom he had hoped to pass his life, and having neither parents nor sister to claim his tender care, as yet attached to no particular place as its minister, he offered to become supernumerary chaplain to Count Cratzenstein without salary. He did so, that he might at once pursue his Christian office where it might be peculiarly useful, and keep alive the affections of his stricken heart, by contributing to the improvement and happiness of a youth, for whom, being nine years older, he felt the fondness of an elder brother.

Thus Rupert preserved in him a sure guide and an estimable example, amidst the perplexities and temptations which surround inexperienced youth, even in the least exposed situation.

In the course of four years, Aremberg's grief for the loss of Eustatia Van-

derhoven, yielded sufficiently to the influence of new and solemn interests, to take from his mention of her name, all violence of emotion; but the wound was not healed, though it ceased to bleed: and there still mixed so great a portion of sadness with his natural seriousness; there was so much embarrassment and reserve in his manner amongst general company, that he was little courted by the many. He was therefore left at liberty to indulge his affection for the few; and to develope with them, that power of pleasing, and those higher qualities which he eminently possessed. Aremberg's exterior also, had nothing uncommon in it: so that an every-day person, manners somewhat strange because abstracted, and a habit of silence, made him overlooked, where far inferior men shone and were admired. But the moment this grave and spiritless person was taken out of the crowd, and engaged in conversation with one who interested and understood

him, he became a new creature; a veil seemed suddenly to drop from before him; and a countenance was disclosed, of such extraordinary and vivid expression, that for the time it blotted out even the most beautiful.

At such moments, his voice, his action, his language, assumed a power and variety which astonished mere lookers-on; and made them believe that hitherto they must have been deaf and blind. But a new person would enter, or some question be asked, which broke the charm to Aremberg himself (the charm of forgetting surrounding observers,) and then all the lights of his countenance went out at once; and he would sink into the quiet every-day man again.

Except in the performance of his sacred office, where Aremberg was uniformly earnest, and energetic, and impelling, Colonel Roselheim thought their gratuitous chaplain not a whit superior to ordinary persons; and he often said so,

laughingly, to Rupert. But Melchior believed that Aremberg was prosperously proceeding in the great work of his nephew's conversion, and as such, he pardoned the young Hollander's insufferable dullness in their camp parties.

It was whimsical that Rupert's most intimate companions should be so perfectly dissimilar: yet perhaps that circumstance early perfected him in the happy habit of trying to find excellencies in opposite natures.

Youth is so apt to confine its notions of moral as well as physical beauty, to one particular order of character as of form, that the power of generalizing his ideas upon both these subjects, was so much gained for Rupert's enjoyments.

Rupert, however, was not inclined by nature, to the close investigation of human character: he had rather the habit of yielding to the impressions made on him by successive actions. If these were disagreeable, of unpleasantly or unwillingly

yielding; if agreeable, of doing so gladly, and suffering his expectation of further good in such persons, to outrun his reason.

Thus he lived on with his uncle, without studying him; and, at the end of four years, was destined to be as much astonished by the developement of certain defects in that uncle, when first operating upon himself, as though such defects had never been displayed in his dealings with others.

To this amiable weakness of his own, his older friend Aremberg often opened his eyes, by piercing observations upon actions and motives which were passing the other unobserved; and, although he forbore to touch the nice subject of a relative and benefactor, he gradually taught Rupert to weigh the conduct and purposes of his companions in a nicer balance.

Other instructions also, he continued to give his young friend, which promised to be of essential service to him through

life; amongst these, was that which he urged on him, when he found him smit with the love of arms, immediately on joining the veteran bands of Sweden.

He exhorted him to submit to a life of drudgery, and hard study for a while, in order to qualify himself for shining hereafter. He convinced him, that the surest way to rise to distinction in any profession, was first to make himself master of its principles, and then to practise them.

For this purpose he promoted his assiduous application to geometry, fortification, and engineering; to the accurate surveying of ground; to observation of the military successes and reverses of great commanders, whether friends or enemies. He urged him also, to cultivate the society of the oldest and best-informed officers, and listen attentively to their conversation upon every one of these subjects.

While encouraging him to this, Arem-

berg convinced him, that to throw up his present situation, inglorious as it seemed, for a military commission, would be to straiten his small income materially, and to place his life at continual hazard, without adequate advantage either to himself or to the service; added to which, his mother's fears would be prematurely called into action, when as yet, they might well be spared.

This last argument was conclusive with Rupert; who consented, therefore, to remain a spectator of other men's exploits, until riper age and a perfected education should entitle him to hope, and to dare, like them.

Content with coarse accommodations, and careless of vanities, he sent nearly all his slender salary to his mother; by that means enabling her to draw less upon his uncle's bounty, and her own ingenuity, than heretofore. He did not, therefore, enter into the occasional expenses of the young officers when quar-

tered in garrison towns; and avoiding their amusements, he had little of their companionship, though much of their good-will.

Among the many ideas which were completely revolutionized by Rupert's change of circumstances and associates, were those formed amongst persons of an opposite party on the subject of the leading characters of the age.

The memories of Gustavus Adolphus, and Bernard of Saxe-Weimar; the names of Oxensteirn, Horn, and Bannier, which he never heard mentioned at Saltzburg or in Vienna, uncoupled with terms of reprobation and pious horror, he now heard uttered with enthusiasm and veneration.

They were heroes here, who were incarnate fiends with the Imperialists; and Rupert might have learned from this, to consider the Catholic subjects of Austria as hateful for such injustice, had he not smiled and sighed to observe, that

their heroes, in return, were abhorred as butchers in the Swedish camp ; and that even the best hearts and clearest judgments are too often blinded by the blaze of party zeal, to admit that equal excellence of intention and conduct may belong to their adversaries.

Amongst the names thus treated, he sometimes noted that of his father ; and with what warring feelings of tenderness and horror did Rupert now hear that name pronounced !

Happily for his feelings, few in the army knew that the Count of Rhinegravestein was related either to him or Colonel Roselheim. For though Rupert was prompt to own that relationship, whenever the direct question of his lineage was asked, he did not hold himself bound to spread his father's shame farther than was necessary, by giving the information unquestioned.

Whatever bitterness might be expended upon the Bavarian general's vile

attachment to persecution and tyranny, Rupert had uniformly the gratification of hearing his military conduct spoken of as brilliant in the extreme; and when men of just minds were his informants, had the greater comfort of finding that his humanity to prisoners and captured towns was as conspicuous as his bravery.

Of his domestic concerns he gained some knowledge from a Bavarian prisoner, whom he remembered to have seen, amongst other retainers, at the young Julian's christening.

The sight of this man, caused such a gush of regret in the heart of Rupert, that it was some time before he could command himself sufficiently for speech. The images of his father, and of his little brother, pressed upon his memory with painful acuteness. He saw again, the pomp and pageantry of the splendid scene in which the proud woman (from whom he then blamed himself for shrinking) usurped his mother's place: he seemed

again to be looking up at the lofty battlements of the castle, emblazoned by the moonlight and the gorgeous banners of his father's new dignities; he heard, — and he started at its fancied distinctness, — once more he heard the thrilling whisper of Esther.

Under the grasp of such recollections, like Joseph at sight of his unkind brethren, Rupert would gladly have gone forth and wept; but he was in the presence of Count Cratzenstein; and it was not until after his task was accomplished, of taking down in writing the answers of the prisoner to some military questions, that he could exchange a few words with him singly, and enquire whether the infant heir of Rhinegravestein were alive and well.

The answer was in the affirmative: and the person who gave it, having no recollection of Rupert, the latter indulged himself in the same question concerning his father.

When he heard that the brave Count was well in health, but carried himself not so cheeringly as formerly, a sharp pang quivered through Rupert's heart, and started a tear in his eye. "My absence has had something to do with this," he said to himself, and turned sorrowing, but not repenting away.

Often, when the vicissitudes of successive campaigns employed the division of Count Cratzenstein against the troops commanded by his father, while he sat shivering with strong emotion in his tent, hearing the far-off roar of the cannon; the ardour he felt to be in the battle, and the shame of being out of it, would quench themselves in sudden tears; as he thought, that perhaps his unrepentant, unpardoned father, might at that moment be expiring amidst victory or defeat.

At such moments, he fancied his military enthusiasm extinguished for ever; believing that neither honours nor wealth could tempt him into a profession which

might arm his hand against a parent's life; but calmer hours brought other thoughts; and the repeated wishes of his good uncle, joined to his own conviction, that no other profession was open to him, with similar prospect of advantage, caused him to resume the studies such saddened feelings made him relax.

Proceeding, therefore, in the performance of ostensible duties which seemed to require the exertion of no higher talents than those of drawing and writing, Rupert's gradual acquirement of all that belonged to a soldier, was unknown to every one save Aremberg; so that, when the moment arrived in which those acquirements were demanded and displayed, they appeared as miraculous to his associates and his uncle, as though the dumb had suddenly been endued with speech.

With his uncle, Rupert continued increasing in favour; for whatever leisure the latter had from his own private studies,

and his employments under Count Cratzenstein, he devoted to him.

Colonel Roselheim was ill qualified to discern or forward his nephew's progress in the science of war: he had never studied its elements anywhere but in the field; where he thought a bright sword, and a bright courage, was all that was needed.

Nature had denied him that quickness of observation and combination, which more than supplies the place of the best theories, upon occasions of emergency; but he knew himself obstinately brave: and though he had some confused notice that other qualifications were required in a great commander, he still believed that these would come with the situation; and as such, he did not submit cheerfully, to that mediocrity of rank, founded upon mediocrity of abilities, which had been his portion for so many years.

His younger brother's military career, at once brilliant and rewarded, had long

embittered his just indignation against him on the subject of his divorce. Unconscious of this culpable feeling, however, he failed to notice that his indignation increased with the Count of Rhinegravestein's honors; and he continued, therefore, to vent its rancour to Rupert, in the form of compassion for his exiled mother, and regard for himself.

Rupert had not yet learned to think it was his duty to hear the unnecessary mention of a parent's crime without a pang; he was consequently pained by these conversations often beyond his power to conceal: yet still affectionately attributing the severity of his uncle's expressions, to respect and tenderness for his mother, and partial interest in himself, he either remained patiently silent, or, making a stronger effort, suddenly remembered some diverting anecdote, which changed Melchior's spleen into good humour and mirth.

Except on the nice points of his own ne-

glected services, and the undue promotion of others, Colonel Roselheim never showed any humour whatever: like his brother's, his temper, though less gracious, was constitutionally good; so that Rupert, in their mutual intercourse, was free from those petty oppositions and minor vexations, with which the old, too often poison all the sweetness of youth.

He loved his uncle, therefore, sincerely, in despite of their growing disparity of mind; and loving him thus, he, too, saw partly with prejudiced eyes; and thought the dauntless soldier ill-repaid for his many campaigns.

The expression of this sentiment, "grappled him to Melchior's heart with hooks of steel."

Melchior, however, secretly believed his nephew deficient in spirit, from his easiness in his present inglorious situation. Yet, strange as it may seem, he liked him not the less for such a defect. He had, perhaps, a dim perception, that his

nephew needed only personal courage to overtop him, as his father had done before him; and knowing himself incapable of continuing to love entirely, the familiar friend that threw him into the shade, he suffered Rupert to go on, studying himself, as he believed, into a mere bookworm.

Little aware of the true reason of this indulgence, Rupert prized it, in proportion as it seemed less likely to be granted by a man, who made no secret of despising every thing but danger and glory.

One of the studies which absorbed the most of Rupert's thoughts, was that of religion. He pursued it with the zeal of youth; a period of life in which such subjects, if once attentively considered, are more apt to seize upon the affection, or alarm the conscience, than at a later season.

Assisted by the wide polemical reading of his friend, and encouraged by the mo-

deration with which he met his doubts and prejudices, Rupert gave the important subject, long and frequent examination.

Aremberg sanctioned his wish of hearing the ablest arguments that could be advanced on the other side, by its best teachers; and as such, he went with him several times, to meet the Catholic chaplain of the Prince de Condé, (when the French and Swedish armies happened to to be acting together); and as the name of this priest, ranked high amongst the learned champions of their church, Aremberg generously determined to give his young friend's early opinions, every lawful advantage.

These candid conferences ended as a friend could wish: perfect conviction rewarded Rupert; and with the consent of every faculty of his mind, and affection of his heart, he was able to declare himself a Protestant.

This desirable change, however, was not formally and publicly declared by him, until he entered his twenty-first year; when the Swedish troops, in consequence of a temporary quarrel between their monarch and the Danish king, had entered Holstein and Jutland, and possessed themselves of several strong-holds there.

The cause of dissension being mediated by the other allies, and a reconciliation being on the point of taking place, hostilities ceased between them. The bulk of the Swedish army advanced to meet the Imperial general Gallas, on the frontier of Holstein, leaving the conquered fortresses occupied by their garrisons, until the treaty with Denmark should be signed. Charged with the business of drawing plans of the different fortified places in Jutland and Sleswick, for use in future campaigns in the same country, should such occur again, Rupert was first left in Coldingen, with his uncle

who commanded there, and then removed into Sleswick and Holstein.

The very first Sabbath after his twentieth birth-day, he made open profession of his change of faith, in the church of the Ockholmer.

The circumstance of a young Catholic officer, for so report had made him, abjuring the doctrines of Rome for those of Lutheran Christians, created much interest in the minds of the Danish people; and several persons of condition came from their country-houses, to witness and partake in the striking ceremony of the new proselyte's first communion.

The church was crowded to suffocation; and (though it was the beginning of September, and otherwise bitingly cold,) that circumstance, and the agitation of Rupert's feelings, made his fair complexion glow like summer.

His tall and graceful figure, wrapt in a plain military cloak, distinguished him amongst the knot of officers by whom he

was surrounded in the body of the church, where only open benches formed the accommodation of the congregation.

With his arms folded, his head bent down, and his face half hid by the thick hair which thus fell over it, he stood attentive, testifying only by the changes of his colour, and the quickness of his respiration, the powerful agitation of his heart.

Nothing but sacred pleasure, however, caused the beating of that heart, at this moment: for coming to it with the fullest conviction; and feeling, that by this act he was about to unite himself more closely with his mother, he lost sight of every image, except her's, and that of the *Great Being* before whom he stood.

Aremberg, to whom the Danish clergyman had granted the privilege of preaching the sermon upon this occasion, and of administering the sacrament afterwards, remained near Rupert during the performance of the liturgy.

Serious and still, as usual, he concealed, under a look of perfect gravity, the ardor of his Christian triumph. But no sooner had he mounted the pulpit, than the veil, as usual, was torn from his countenance: his looks, kindled with his own fervid eloquence; and the congregation, whose eyes had hitherto seen only the young convert, fixed them upon his instructor, and became equally interested in the spiritual welfare of both.

The devotional and sympathising feelings which Aremberg's discourse produced, was in fact the exultation of the many, over the one deemed lost, and now regained, to the fold of our Divine Shepherd; and if tears were shed, they were tears honorable to Christians.

When the dispensing of the bread and wine afterwards took place, a deep silence reigned throughout the church. Only the full and impressive voice of Aremberg was heard, repeating, at intervals,

the same simple and sublime words, which at every repetition, thrill the soul with the same awe and love.

His voice was observed to falter a little, and his hand to shake, when he stopt before his kneeling friend; but upon such a solemn occasion, no other sign of recognition appeared in his sedate countenance; and after an instant's pause, he passed on to others.

As Rupert arose from his knees to make room for fresh communicants, in his haste to retreat from observation, he stumbled, and might have fallen, had not some one extended their hand, and so helped him to recover his footing.

He looked up, while acknowledging the kindness by a bend of the head, and saw that the person to whom he was obliged was a young and handsome woman; but staying not, either to look at or think of her again, he returned to his place in the body of the church, and pursued his private devotions.

When the service was completely over, Aremberg and Rupert quitted the church together.

Many of the congregation still loitered in the burying ground before the principal door, to take a nearer view of the young convert as he passed. Somewhat abashed by this, Rupert silently impelled Aremberg forward, and that so hurryingly, that in passing through the crowded entrance of the church-yard itself, they caused two ladies who were walking slowly before, to turn round, and then stop to let them pass.

As the tallest and slenderest, put aside the furred hood of her cloak, Rupert saw the oval face and speaking black eyes of the young lady by whom he had been assisted on the steps of the altar table; and he bowed his thanks again.

Aremberg, who happened to be looking up at the same time, liked both the colour and the expression which started into the young lady's face, as she

modestly curtsied in return: but he took no further notice of them; and went on, in silent musing upon higher subjects.

CHAP. VIII.

HAVING gone immediately after this momentous day, to head-quarters at Rendsburg, Rupert found the principal part of his uncle's regiment, with himself at their head, had been withdrawn in the night from the forts in Jutland, in consequence of information that a strong body of troops, raised by the Bishop of Munster, were advancing to threaten the rear of the army pursuing General Gallas; and that it was necessary, therefore, to keep this new force in check, by presenting a well-ordered front upon the borders of Westphalia, and by carefully guarding all the passages of two important rivers.

For this purpose Colonel Roselheim took up a position on the Holstein side of the Weser, sending out detachments

to watch the motions of the enemy, and prevent surprize, should his intention be to attack their slender camp.

Rupert being still employed in enriching Count Cratzenstein's stock of topographical plans, passed alternately from head-quarters to those of his uncle, whence he made excursions round; trusting for the occasional accommodations of food and a bed, (for both of which, no one cared so little as Rupert,) to the different out-posts of Cratzenstein's brigade. He was one evening riding back from a visit of this sort, when he overtook a trumpeter and a small party of dragoons, who were coming in late from foraging; and finding them parlying with a countryman, whom they had challenged in passing, he staid to ask a few questions on the subject of their conversation.

The countryman's information was of moment: it imported that above a hundred of the enemy's horse were then

resting in a walled village on the opposite bank of the Aller, which they talked of crossing at a ford lower down, at the dead of night. It seemed that their business was to escort an officer with dispatches; and these most likely were of some consequence, from the number of the party, and the circumstance of their having set a guard, although they were to remain so few hours in the village.

The man having been insulted and plundered by this party when on their road, was wantonly carried thither by one of them, and detained afterwards to groom his horse, while he drank. In the confusion of some drinking, and others snatching a short sleep, their prisoner escaped; and seizing a fishing-boat which he luckily found afloat, he punted himself across the river, and was proceeding to beg a night's shelter at the first cottage he might find, when Cratzenstein's dragoons encountered him.

Rupert immediately saw all the importance of this unexpected communication; and cross-questioning the peasant, speedily convinced himself that his testimony was true.

He guessed at once, that some great change in the movement of the Munsterian troops must be taking place; and not doubting that those dispatches were intended to apprize the Imperial General, either of an intended junction by some new road, or of the necessity of their falling back, and thus leaving him unsupported, he was seized with a burning desire to risk every thing, and, by a hardy exploit, make or ruin himself.

In a few rapid words he explained to the surrounding troopers the improbability of their reaching the quarters of any field officer, and returning time enough to prevent the enemy's passage of the river. He suggested the importance of dispatches thus escorted; and the glory

it would be to their little band, were they to succeed in securing them, and thus turning, perhaps, the fate of the whole campaign. He hastily sketched a plan which rushed into his mind for this purpose, and asked them whether they would trust themselves to the guidance of so young a man as himself, who could only promise that he would be the first to face the enemy, and the last to turn his back on them?

Deceived by the fire of his manner, and the military fashion of his cloak, the troopers concluded him to be an officer; and scarcely waiting for the conclusion of his address, unanimously declared their eagerness to follow him wherever he chose.

His dispositions were soon and quietly made. The dragoons dismounted from their horses; and transferring their large jingling spurs from their heels to their saddles, left them and their iron sword-

sheaths appended, to swing about with the motions of the animals, and so increase the noise of their galloping.

The horses thus accoutred, were made to take the river by the trumpeter; (to whose management the stratagem connected with them was committed,) and stationed under the shade of some broken ground, (while the rest of the party got silently into the boat at a part of the stream nearer the village,) they remained waiting for the concerted signal, to put themselves in motion.

The party in the boat, having crossed the stream without discovery, proceeded under cover of its high alders, and favoured by the noise of a rising wind among their branches, till they came at once upon the enemy's quarters.

Rupert was the first to leap over the loose-stone wall of the village: his brave comrades followed. Directed by the countryman, whom not only revenge but the hope of reward stimulated to share in

the bold adventure, they rushed at once upon the main guard.

The extreme darkness of the night happily favoured their stratagem, by concealing their inferior number; and the shouts of "Down with the Bishop's men!" vociferated by the dragoons, being answered by the shrill blast of the trumpet, for which this shout was to be the signal, the guard believed the village surrounded, and yielded instantly.

Rupert had scarcely time to disarm and seize the officer who carried the dispatches, ere the rest of the Munsterians came running to their comrades succour: but these also, made only a short resistance; for here the galloping of the led horses proclaimed the approach of fresh enemies. The clashing of the huge spurs against the iron sword-sheaths, the sound of the horses' hoofs echoing along the flinty road, the repeated blasts of the trumpet, mixed with their loud neighings, produced the effect Rupert

had anticipated; and making the enemy believe that it was a whole regiment of cavalry advancing to cut them in pieces, the former yielded at once to their panic, and took to flight.

The occupation of the village, Rupert knew to be of little consequence; and even were it otherwise, it would be impossible for his small party to maintain it against the number of men they had just conquered partly by stratagem and partly by resolute intrepidity, should the latter discover their true strength, and return to to retake the post.

The dispatches were every thing; and having secured these, and made both the officers prisoners, he and his dauntless band, set forward without delay, for the quarters of Colonel Roselheim.

The astonishment of Melchior at this bold action of a young man whom he had believed destined to slumber through life, was not to be described. Its excess seemed to stupify him; for it was

many minutes before he roused himself sufficiently to utter a hasty expression of pleasure, and proceed to order his aid-de-camp to go forward with the papers to Count Cratzenstein. Military regulations forbade their examination by an inferior officer.

The glow of pleasure which the acclamations of the soldiery had raised in Rupert, when he and his associates entered his uncles's quarters with their prisoners, was greatly damped by his uncle's manner. He ascribed this, however, to Melchior's expectation of a severe reproof awaiting him at Rendsburg, (where it was necessary he should go,) either in consequence of some oversight in the performance of the enterprize, or for the presumption of the enterprize itself; and fearing to be quite palsied beforehand, by extracting a confession of this fear from his good uncle, he went away in silence, to face his final judge.

Having reached Rendsburg the next day, the aid-de-camp went into the General, while Rupert retired to his own room in the same house. Half an hour of disagreeable apprehension, was terminated by a message from the Count, desiring to see him alone: he obeyed the summons directly.

An instant dissipated Rupert's fears. For the first time since their acquaintance of four years, Cratzenstein advanced, and shook him warmly by the hand, complimented him upon his bravery and military genius, and asking him what he supposed those dispatches contained, that he should think them worth so great a risk as the attack of one hundred horse, by twenty only? obtained from Rupert another proof of military talent, in his clear statement of what had actually proved to be their contents.

Telling him that he had guessed right and acted ably, Cratzenstein then enquired his age, his connections, his dif-

ferent qualifications; and concluded by offering him a vacant commission in his own regiment.

Taken by surprize, Rupert's usual modest quietness gave way before the wish of self-approval and unexpected praise; and his answer had so much fire in it, that Cratzenstein saw in a moment what sort of spirit had lain thus long dormant at his writing-desk.

He complimented the young man upon the high martial character of his father, though gained in an adverse service, and recommending him to make it his ambition to reach equal eminence, advised him to write and ask the Count of Rhinegravestein to fit him out, for his new situation.

At this speech, evidently proceeding from a sense obtuse to every species of honor, except that of the field, Rupert with difficulty suffocated the expression of his horror and indignation; and simply saying, that now he

acknowledged no father except his kind uncle, to whom he principally owed Count Cratzenstein's notice; thanked him anew for the promised commission, and retired.

The bright visions of sanguine youth, which had just before filled the whole soul of Rupert, were dispersed by the needful reminder of Count Cratzenstein.

Mortification he had known; sorrow he had known; but care — never. Hitherto, provided with a very scanty, yet sufficient income, (since he bounded his desires to its limits,) he had not, for a moment had occasion to think of money with any trouble of spirit: but now, he was forced to see its wide importance; and to feel in his own person, that there are innumerable opportunities of retrieving or making a fortune, which the poor man must often relinquish, because he has not even the means to secure such.

Rupert had frequently heard the subject

of uniforms, and chargers, discussed by his young companions ; and he now stood appalled at the expenses he must incur at the very commencement of his envied career. He repented the precipitancy with which he had accepted the commission ; and nearly in despair, determined to resign it, should he find, after consulting his uncle, that such expenses were unavoidable.

In this mood, while going to seek his friend, he was met by Aremberg himself, coming in quest of him.

The welcome and congratulations of this sincere friend upon a brave and signal advantage, achieved without the loss of a single life, for the moment banished every unpleasant feeling ; but such quickly returned; and he was uneasy till he got out of the street and retired into Aremberg's lodgings.

There, Rupert imparted his only distress, and his unwillingness to draw so largely upon his uncle's credit, (for any thing, more than his credit, he knew him

incapable of affording,) and he, therefore, sincerely asked Aremberg, whether this were not one of the cases, in which the latter had taught him, a man should deny his own wishes, when by gratifying them, he lessened his independence, or risked his character for honesty?

Aremberg's answer was simple. "Rupert," he said, "knew that his income was much beyond his moderate habits; and he ought to know, also, that all the surplus of that, was at his young friend's service."

"But do I not know how that part of your income is employed?" exclaimed Rupert, his heart speaking in his eyes.—"No, Aremberg, I will not rob the soldiers' widows and orphans."

Aremberg's embarrassed pshaw! was followed by more serious arguments against Rupert's hasty resolution. These were grounded upon the wisdom of seizing this favourable opening in the line he had previously determined upon; on the

probability of its eventually affording him the means of wholly supporting his mother, and repaying his uncle; and on Aremberg's earnestly-avowed opinion, that the worldly goods of real friends should be open to each other's emergencies, without a question.

All that his reasoning obtained, however, was Rupert's promise to weigh the subject well, ere he took so rash a step as that of relinquishing Count Cratzenstein's favour.

A few days rendered further debate unnecessary. The messenger returned from the Commander-in-chief, whom he had come up with near Gutterbach, where a signal victory over the enemy was gained that very day, in consequence of the information given of the retrograde movement of the Munsterians, in the intercepted dispatches.

Field-Marshal Torstenson, in repeating this to Count Cratzenstein, and extolling the bold and judicious exploit which

had placed these dispatches at their command, noticed with approbation, the offer made to Rupert of a commission, but requested that the young cavalier should be mounted and equipped at his expense, as a testimony of his high consideration of the latter's courage and ability.

A present thus tendered, as a mark of distinction, not as a grace given to necessity, was impossible for Rupert to refuse. He accepted it joyfully; and thus relieved in the most agreeable way from his greatest distress, wrote to tell his mother of his changed situation, and brightening prospects.

The increased partiality of his intimate associates; the evident favour in which he was now held by all the troops; and the affectionate pleasure of Aremberg; heightened that honest self-satisfaction in him, which when justly grounded, incites to further excellence. This satisfaction was increased also, by the cir-

cumstance of honorary badges being given to the brave fellows that had shared his danger. He felt no drawback on his joy, except in his uncle's changed humour.

He was pained to observe that the triumph Colonel Roselheim was called upon to express in his nephew's good fortune and desert, was not able to overcome his vexation at the circumstance of the commission being given him in another regiment than the one he commanded. He went about, complaining that now he had made an able soldier of Rupert, he was to lose the fruit of that labour, and to see the abilities he had fostered, ripened for another's advantage.

How Melchior could attribute Rupert's courage and conduct to himself, even the latter could not discover: but seeing that the veteran did really make this illusion, and fancied that his example and conversation, rather than natural spirit and observation, were the causes

of Rupert's brilliant essay, he joined in lamenting the circumstance which must partly separate their military career; while he represented his own inability to dictate the form of a favour.

The present from Marshal Torstenson gave peculiar umbrage to Melchior. At first he found fault with the plainness of the accoutrements, and the appearance of the horse; hinting at shabbiness in the donor. Then with some inconsistency he quarrelled with the extraordinary spirit of the charger, and the foppery of the inlaid breastplate; swearing the Field Marshal must intend the one should break his nephew's neck, after the other had made a fool of him. And lastly, his real feelings found vent, in assertions, that any boy's trick, no cleverer than the robbing of an orchard, — pins-scratches of wounds, were rewarded now-a-days with distinctions, for which men who were grown grey in

the service, might pour out all their blood, and make campaigns for twenty winters, in vain!

Good humour was so habitual with Melchior, that four or five days of continued spleen and gloom, were matter of as much astonishment as grief to Rupert. He thought this was but humour; little suspecting that it arose from a far worse feeling; envy of another's success: aggravated too, by a habit of affectionate contempt for that person's constitutional courage.

The clouds at length, thick as they were, broke away. The bitterness of mortification was allayed by the unaffected modesty of Rupert, which made him readily grant that his little enterprsie was extravagantly overpaid: and affection in proportion to its temporary obstruction, returned to him in a fuller stream.

A letter of thanks to her kind brother-in-law from Madame Roselheim, in which

she naturally gave his example and instructions the chief praise of her son's distinction, completed the rout of those foul fiend's ill-humour and ill-will: so that the uncle, better supported in the belief of his own great desert, by this testimony, was less inclined to grudge his nephew the lighter measure of his.

Restored to his better self, Colonel Roselheim's generous feelings knew no bounds; and he would have pressed upon Rupert several ornamental additions to his martial habit, which in those days were completely at the will of the wearer, and the objects of vain competition amongst the young.

At that period, if the graver commander of a regiment secretly prided himself upon the rich materials and striking device of its standard, his subalterns found distinction in the superior embroidery and value of their military scarfs: or in the massy gold chains which hung round their necks.

In the Imperial camp these chains were frequently seen fastened by buttons of precious stones, to become, as an historian tells us; *a sort of retaining fee to the person who should take its wearer prisoner.* The Swedes however, were neither so rich, nor so vain-glorious, as to aspire at such costly decoration; Colonel Roselheim knew therefore, that even his slender purse could furnish his nephew with one as handsome as the best of theirs.

Rupert had some difficulty in persuading his uncle to let him remain contented with the severe simplicity which the Field-marshal had evidently denoted as most soldier-like, by the fashion and quality of the accoutrements ordered for him; and he finished his victory, by asking, as the only gift he coveted, the plain sword with which his uncle had so long and so bravely fought the battles of conscience.

At this request, tears rolled down the rough veteran's cheeks, and grasping his nephew's hand, he bade God bless him! owning that he deserved his better fortune.

Cratzenstein's Horse, continued to occupy Rendsberg, after Rupert was incorporated with them: and as his uncle's regiment of foot was quartered in the other fortresses of Danish Holstein, he was enabled to see him nearly as often as formerly.

Impatiently waiting for the ratification of the peace between Denmark and Sweden, which would release these two regiments from inactive service, and reunite them with those in full campaign, Rupert employed his time in becoming well acquainted with the character of the officers and men, amongst whom he was henceforth to act; and assisted by Aremberg's experience of mankind, succeeded in selecting such

from amongst the former, as were likely to forward his pursuit of true honour.

To see his mother again, from whom he had been separated so long, and whose many excellencies he knew himself better qualified to appreciate now, than at the period of boyhood, was the first wish of his heart. That wish, however, could not be indulged. Just entering into a new profession, with two powerful friends, happily made for him by a lucky incident, he knew that it was his duty to make the most of such fortune, and to wait until peace, or his own services, should entitle him to ask leave of absence.

Meanwhile, the letters of his mother formed the delight of his solitary moments; and though his eager perusal of them when they arrived, or frequent repetition of them afterwards, sometimes excited a little harmless raillery in his

guard associates, he received it with smiles; and either knew, or pleased himself with supposing, that those gay jesters respected the sentiments they sported with.

CHAP. IX.

It was now the middle of October, and occasional storms, with increasing cold, made a station between the two wintry seas of the north, little desirable. Rupert was on guard at a small out-post near Itzehoe, when the officer who came to relieve him, brought intelligence that one of those terrible inundations frequent on that coast, had taken place in the night, in consequence of a spring-tide, and south-west gale, and that not only all the west side of Holstein, but the whole countries of Sleswick and Jutland were swallowed up.

Jutland and Sleswick, it is known, form together a sort of peninsula two hundred miles in length; starting out

from Holstein, between the two seas of the Baltic and the German ocean. The western shores of this peninsula are low and marshy, but luxuriant in pasturage and herds, and populous with inhabitants: the eastern side, rises into hills richly wooded or covered with arable lands; and its coast, like the mouths of the great Holstein rivers, are thickly set with fertile islands.

Thus it is considered the richest part of the Danish dominions; and for many centuries its preservation from these devastating floods, frequent as terrible, became the serious object of their government's attention.

Dykes and embankments were constructed as in Holland; but being done with inferior skill, the ramparts they opposed to the force of the winds and waves, continually gave way before their united rage; and whole provinces were ruined, and whole generations swept off, in a single night.

Great convulsions of nature, indeed great objects of any kind, can rarely be heard of, without exciting in the hearer an earnest wish to witness their effects. Youth is, upon all occasions, greedy of strong emotions: youth is also the season of generous impulses. Rupert's pity and curiosity were therefore roused at the same instant; and staying only to ask a few requisite questions, he hurried away to seek Aremberg, that they might ride together to the inundated country. Hope of succouring some of the sufferers, gave wings to his feet.

The valued companion was soon gained; and mounting their horses, the friends set out in the direction of the Elbe.

It was night when they came in sight of the inundation. The fearful roar of the waters was heard, long ere they saw themselves: but when, having quitted their horses, and ascended the high tower of an observatory, they looked

down upon the low country, — or rather where that country had been,— they were transfixed with horror and amazement. As far as the eye could reach, was overwhelmed by the flood: every island of the Hever-stroem, and those still further out, in the north sea, was covered with the terrible element; and Rupert saw with feelings impossible to describe, ships borne over the places where those islands had been, as if riding in open sea.

Where he had so lately beheld a fertile coast, covered with villages and towns, with churches and colleges, and populous with happy industry, he saw only formless water, under which lay buried those villages and towns, with all their wealth and their inhabitants.

Not only the rich marshes of Sleswick and Ditmarsen were drowned by this awful flood, but the higher grounds were fast disappearing under its rising volumes.

Even now the water came thundering on, assaulting with repeated shocks the walls of the remaining strong buildings, on the tops of which, some living objects might yet be discerned. The cries of these unhappy people, if they uttered any, were lost in the din of the waves, and the howling of the winds.

It was still blowing so violently from the south-west, that it seemed as if all Jutland would be overflowed, and that the two seas of the Baltic and the German Ocean would unite over her desolated land.

The whole surface below the eye was rushing water; while above, the dim moon, like a pale phantom, wandered through the pathless sky.

Sometimes the faint outline of her disk was traceable among the drifting vapours; but soon those vapours obscured it: and then first her form, and finally her light, confused and melted away into the watery clouds.

So sad and solemn a light, indeed, seemed like the funeral torch of all those Dead, extinguishing in tears. Fancy might have imaged, too, some pitying angel extending it over the dismal scene, contemplating thus, from the height of heaven, the calamities of earth.

The first great judgment upon a guilty world, was shadowed out by this dreadful flood; and as Rupert and Aremberg stood surveying it, first awe, and then anguish, seized them. Both felt the same emotion; and at the same moment, after a brief suspension of every faculty, both buried their faces in their hands, bowing their souls before the dispensations of God. Their next impulse was to endeavour at yielding assistance.

A few words exchanged between them sufficed to settle what they should attempt; and hastening down from the observatory, they remounted their horses, aud rode to the nearest place where they

were likely to procure a boat, and other aid to their humane intention.

The inhabitants of the village they went to, were too eagerly providing for their own safety, in case the rising flood should overtake them, to have time or concern for the actual sufferers. Some, however, promised to join in the benevolent risk of the strangers, so soon as they should have placed their own flesh and blood in security. Others deprecated all efforts to succour their distressed neighbours, so long as the wind blew with such destructive violence as to threaten the lives of any rash enough to attempt braving it; and several, in utter despair, exclaimed it was God's will, that the whole country should perish by water, as in the days of Noah, and that it was impious to wrestle with Divine power.

Aremberg said a few energetic words upon the duty of Christians to assist each other in all common calamities, and to hazard personal safety, with full con-

fidence in Him who commanded his disciple to walk the waves unfearing; then aware that this was a time for action rather than argument, he hurried into the boat, where one brave fisherman, and the anxious Rupert, waited to receive him.

At sight of Rupert standing in an open boat, ready to launch into the fearful chaos of winds and waters, and darkening clouds before them, Aremberg stopt short. He thought of the young man's mother, and felt as if he were not justified in allowing an only child, the sole hope and stay of that desolate mother, to become a victim to humanity.

"This is frightful!" he exclaimed, looking round with an air of disturbance and dismay, unusual to him. "No, Rupert, I must not let you; for Heaven's sake come out of the boat! — for your mother's sake!"

"For my mother's sake!" Rupert repeated with undamped zeal, and undaunted resolution, "she would go herself

to save these poor people, if she were here, and none else to help them."

He pointed to some objects which were seen between the low clouds and the water, emitting a feeble light now and then, as if lanthorns were moved to and fro, by persons on the tops of buildings.

"But she is not here," returned Aremberg, "and she can never know all these urging circumstances: come, come, it is my duty, and I will go without you."

"Why you will not fancy it your duty to drag me out of a battle when I am in one?" said Rupert, with determined cheerfulness. "Heaven's protection is everywhere; and especially over us when we are doing right things: have I to teach that to you, Aremberg?" and as he spoke, with a sudden movement he pulled his friend into the boat, and dashed an oar into the water.

The short and fervent prayer which Aremberg inwardly put up for a few

moments afterwards, was neither for himself nor for the poor people to whose relief they were hastening.

Dismal and dangerous was their voyage. The cry, and the forms of sea-birds, mixing with the wild blast and the sweeping clouds, over that waste of waters, often deceived them, and made them row towards the spot where they fancied a drowning person was struggling.

The bird's startling shriek, and the heavy flapping of her wings, as she rose and soared away, suited the dreary scene: but such sounds were cheerful music, compared with the actual calls, faint as they were, of human beings losing their last hold of walls, or floating timber, and dropping exhausted or benumbed into the devouring flood; of such as yet struggled to preserve objects dearer than themselves; and of the few, who had timely attained the tops of lofty edifices, but were likely to perish there, for want

of food, and from the severity of the tempestuous night.

Large bodies of something floating, probably trees and broken bridges, swept past their boat; often threatening to overturn it: but the sickly moon only gleamed at intervals; so that they could but now and then see the boiling of that vast cauldron, which they heard seething with fearful noise, without distinguishing the particular objects upon its surface.

Distracted with the vain desire of going to the succour of all, they perhaps wasted time and strength, by rowing in different directions at every cry of distress; never alas! arriving at the right instant, or at the exact spot. They at length decided upon rowing steadily towards one object, a small church; which being built upon a spot of elevated ground, yet preserved its square tower above water.

Directed by the sound of its bell,

which kept incessantly ringing, and by a greater body of collected lights on its platform, than in any other quarter of the horizon, the friends, relieving each other by turns, rowed up to it.

A rope adroitly thrown by the fisherman, who had acted as steersman, enabled the shivering unfortunates above, to moor it to the wall; and Aremberg, according to previous arrangement with his companions, immediately ascended by it.

Wringing of hands, weeping, blessings, prayers, instantly surrounded him: there were more than thirty persons upon the platform, some of whom fell at his feet; others seized his hands, his garments; all inarticulately besought him, for the love of God, to save them, or their children.

With as much calmness as he could maintain in so affecting a scene, and aware of the necessity of dispatch, he made the eager group sensible that it

was his duty to place the very old and helpless, first out of danger; and that as the boat could not with safety contain more than ten persons, he must select such objects now: he began immediately to collect the aged and the children.

Among the advanced in life, was a woman evidently of superior rank, quite speechless with cold and illness, for whom a young lady supplicated with convulsive earnestness; stripping herself of her own cloak, to increase the defences of the invalid.

Occupied solely with this infirm person's escape from the ghastly death which had been threatening them all, the young lady anxiously lent her feeble aid to lower her into the boat; then, turning hastily away, at sight of the trembling hand which invited her to follow, she motioned for Aremberg to resume his place with the voyagers.

Instead of obeying this motion, Arem-

berg would have drawn her forward, but retreating further, she said convulsively, "There is no room for me: make haste, Sir, or some one will take your place."

Struck with her manner, Aremberg answered with emotion, "I am a Christian minister, madam, and my duty is here; go you, in Heaven's name, with your mother;" and, leaving her no time for hesitation, he hurried her to the side of the tower: she was the next instant lifted down into the boat.

Rupert, who was well aware that equal danger threatened them that went and them that staid, but who would fain that he and his friend had yet shared that danger together, at this moment called out, "God bless you, Aremberg!" while he cast up his cloak from below, to protect some of the freezing unfortunates, from the bitter night wind. The tone of his voice thrilled Aremberg to the heart, so that he could scarcely com-

mand his own, when he echoed the parting blessing.

The fisherman then let go the mooring rope; and the splash of their oars, was again heard, mixing with the uproar of the elements.

Long and painfully did Aremberg stand watching, or rather striving to watch, the progress of this little vessel, under the dim sky, through the stormy flood: utter darkness grew upon the night; and the boat was soon to be traced only by the small ray of its single lanthorn: even that at length disappeared, or ceased to be visible, and he tore his eyes from the quarter upon which they had been thus intently fixed, ejaculating "May the Almighty preserve them!"

Sad and awful were the hours which intervened between this moment and that in which the persons on the church hoped the re-appearance of the boat. Aremberg's imagination lent additional horrors to the scene; or, rather, too faith-

fully depicted such as neither his ear nor his eye could mark: and, while endeavouring to sooth the fears, and raise the hopes of his fainting companions, his compassionate heart was wrung with the mixed multitude of doleful sounds, some near, and some distant, which loaded the air, and from their very indistinctness caused a greater distraction of frightful images. Sometimes he thought it was only the roaring of the blast he heard, or the deafening roar of the sea: then he fancied human voices mixed with it; and he exerted his own, to call to the supposed, or really drowning persons, directing them to seize the rope now suspended from the tower, and to which one of the lanthorns by way of lighted buoy was attached.

Night wore away: the wind, which had raged so furiously, suddenly sunk; and such a fearful stillness succeeded, that it seemed to Aremberg as if the task of ruin were completed, and silence

and desolation had covered man and his works for ever.

This stillness, however, was only comparative, for the sullen washing to and fro of that vast body of water, was yet heard, mixed with the splashing sound of buildings which its motion sapped, and loosening from their foundations, cast into the dark abyss.

No human sounds, save the weeping of the persons round him, were now heard, or fancied by Aremberg; only the distant howling of a dog, continued through the whole of that long, long, night.

As the hours wore away, and the waters appeared rising higher and higher, the distraction of the unhappy people upon the church, became nearly ungovernable; some bemoaned the fate of those who had gone away, believing them drowned; others accused them of barbarous indifference to the miserables left behind.

Aremberg scarcely doubting the first conjecture, torn with pity for Madame Roselheim, and sorrow for the untimely end of the youth he loved so truly, tried to calm the transports of his companions' despair, and the swelling grief of his own heart; but it was in vain that he assured them the place they stood on was yet firm, when every moment they heard the fall, or the rush of other buildings, as lofty. He then enquired the name of the church, that he might calculate its exact distance from the unflooded country, and so estimate the probability of relief reaching them in time.

When he heard it was the church of the Ockholmer, an awful yet pleasing emotion overpowered every other. He was contented to perish where the most solemn seal that can be placed upon human friendship, had stamped his and Rupert's: it was consoling to remember that among Rupert's last acts, had been

this of joining himself to the true church.

With feelings too raised for tears, Aremberg, calling upon his weeping associates to join him in a prayer for deliverance from their peril, or grace to support it patiently, knelt down in the midst of them. Their unknown faces were faintly shown by the sickly light of their lanthorns: he prayed, and he prayed for these strangers more fervently than for himself.

Morning broke over them thus engaged; and as the grey dawn stole on the gloom of night, and saffron gleams coloured the cold clouds, by slow degrees the wide scene of desolation was disclosed.

All to the west and north was an interminable sheet of water, save here and there where it was pierced by the spire of some high-seated church, appearing like the tall mast of some sunken vessel.

To the east, where the sun was gloriously ascending, were visible the hilly parts of Jutland and Holstein, with their towns and wooded hamlets, whither it was hoped many of the inhabitants of these lower lands had fled in time to save themselves; and to the south, — O joy unutterable! — were seen numerous boats plying oars and sails, to reach surviving sufferers.

The frantic expressions of joy and gratitude, which burst from his companions at this unexpected sight, would have been echoed by Aremberg, had not other thoughts, besides those of their preservation and his own, been busy in his mind. If the boat which had borne away Rupert were not amongst this blessed fleet, life was little to him. A second time destined to lose the thing dearest to him, was he a second time to live on? Religion answered that desponding question.

The boats separated in different directions, their rowers hallooing to rouse and cheer such as were yet spared by the bitter cold, and awful deluge. One, followed by a larger one, took the direction of the church. No sooner was it near enough to make sounds distinct, than Aremberg heard the well-remembered voice of the fisherman, calling out "All's well!" and although, as the boat drew nearer, he discovered the other man to be a stranger, he would not permit himself to doubt the blessed import of these words.

His trust was not deceived. While helping the poor Ockholmers to descend, he exchanged a few sentences with the fisherman, which completely dissipated his fears.

He learnt, that in its return from the church, the shock of striking against some resisting object, concealed under the flood, had nearly overset the boat,

and in fact caused a child to be thrown out from its mother's lap. In attempting to recover this child, and to preserve it after having done so, Rupert, who had jumped overboard, so exhausted and strained himself, that it was impossible for him to use an oar; so that his brave companion, finding no one courageous enough to take his place, after they gained *terra firma*, until day-break should render a voyage less hazardous, was obliged to wait that period.

When he heard this narration, Aremberg suspected what was indeed true, that Rupert's humanity had disabled him in a greater degree than he chose to have repeated; and he justly figured him nearly deprived of sense and motion, even when the fisherman left him last: but he would not imagine the evil more than a temporary one; and giving loose to pious gratitude, he followed the last Ockholmer into the boat.

The church did not stand long afterwards: — it was finally swept away.

The barking of the dog, which had been heard the whole night, had suddenly ceased soon after day-break; and at that time Aremberg fancied that the animal, wet and cold before, had perished then from the peculiar chill of the hour which precedes sun-rise.

Remembering the direction whence that sound had come, as the boat neared the remains of a high garden-wall, he believed this to be the place, and he suspended the oar he plied, while he called out and asked if any one was there? No one answered; and he rowe nearer. More than one object was now discernible upon the narrow parapet. On coming close to it, the body of a man, evidently dead, was seen lying along, with a large dog at his feet.

The animal was alive; but though they called to him, inviting him to

spring into the water to them, he seemed to understand, and refuse their kindness: he lay with his head between his fore-paws, and his eyes fixed upon the face of the dead person; not as if he watched his awaking, but as if conscious that he would awake no more.

Aremberg could not leave the remains of a fellow-creature in such a condition: the rites of Christian burial are due to the meanest individual, whenever we can afford them; and, aided by the honest fisherman who claimed the sensible animal beforehand as his reward, he succeeded in removing the body. Its humble guardian jumped down after it.

It was evident that the master had perished from the cause to which Aremberg had attributed the dog's stillness, (for he was an old man, and his limbs were already rigid,) and that the latter had ceased to bark, when his sagacity instructed him that help could no longer avail.

The corpse, respectfully covered with a cloak, was now laid at the bottom of the boat; the pale faces of all who assisted in placing it there, testifying their sad and solemn feelings: the dog extended himself along it, and lay there perfectly still.

The boat then proceeded on its way again: when they reached the land, the dog was dead.

Both the bodies were silently carried into the kitchen of a small inn, whence Rupert had just proceeded, to watch for the arrival of the boat; he was the first person whom Aremberg saw when he landed; and though still suffering from the painful effect of a strained shoulder, it had cost him much, to control his anxious desire of launching again upon that fearful flood, to ascertain his friend's safety.

Their meeting was joyful; but silently so: for so much misery was around them, that they shuddered to feel them-

selves happy. After a hearty embrace, the friends spoke only of those for whom they had risked their lives ; and Aremberg heard with equal surprise and pleasure, that Rupert had discovered in the young lady and her infirm companion, his mother's young cousin, Adolpha Falkenberg, and that cousin's protectress, Madame Krazau.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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